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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-107 CONTENTS *3 June 1996*

NOTICE: An * indicates material that may not be disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Arab League Official Demands Israel 'Honor Commitments' *[MENA]* 1
Inter-Arab: Jordanian, PA Figures React to Likud Victory *[London MBC TV]* 1
Inter-Arab: GCC Ministerial Council Issues Press Statement *[SPA]* 4

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives 'Important' Message From Clinton *[Jericho VOP]* 6
Palestinian Affairs: Al-Tibi—'Arafat Not To Resign Despite 'Bitter News' *[Tel Aviv Radio]* . 6
Palestinian Affairs: Netanyahu Adviser Telephones PLO's 'Abbas *[Jericho VOP]* 7
Palestinian Affairs: Quray'—Talks Require New Approach, New Team, New Venue *[Jerusalem Radio]* 8
Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Views Impact of Israeli Election Results *[Jericho VOP]* 8
Palestinian Affairs: Al-Tibi Disappointed With Netanyahu's 'Hesitant' Speech *[Jerusalem Radio]* 10
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser Views 'Negative Impact' of Netanyahu Win *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 10
Palestinian Affairs: 'Asfur—Palestinians Not To Allow 'Foot-Dragging' in Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 11
Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet, PLO Executive Committee Discuss Election Results *[Gaza TV]* . 11
Palestinian Affairs: PLO's Qaddumi Comments on Israeli Elections *[MENA]* 11
Palestinian Affairs: 'Ashrawi—Netanyahu 'Will Try To Deal With Realities' *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 12
Palestinian Affairs: German PLO Representative 'Cannot Rule Out' Terrorism *[Munich TV]* . 12
Palestinian Affairs: PA Envoy—Peace Signed With Israeli State, Not Likud *[MENA]* 13
Palestinian Affairs: New Israeli Government Urged To Implement Agreements *[Jericho VOP]* 13
Palestinian Affairs: Opposition Expects 'Hot' Summer After Netanyahu's Victory *[Tehran International]* 14
Palestinian Affairs: DFLP, PFLP—'Armed Struggle' Against Israel To Continue *[AFP]* 14
Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Statement Calls Peres, Netanyahu 'War Criminals' *[AFP]* 15
Palestinian Affairs: Fatah Urges Israeli Peace Forces To Defy Peace 'Enemies' *[Jericho VOP]* 15
Palestinian Affairs: Editorial—Israelis Chose 'Policy of Extremism' *[AL-QUDS 1 Jun]* 16

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Jordanian Delegation to Water Talks Cancels Visit to Israel *[Jerusalem Radio]* 16

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

Egypt: Syrian President al-Asad Arrives on 'Brief' Visit *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Mubarak, Syria's al-Asad Hold Talks in Cairo *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Mubarak Comments on Netanyahu's Victory in Israeli Election *[MENA]* 17
Egypt: Musa—Netanyahu Needs Time To Map Out Policy *[MENA]* 17

Egypt: Mubarak, Husayn, 'Arafat Discuss Israeli Election on Phone *[MENA]* ... 18
Egypt: Mubarak Views Israeli Election, Netanyahu's Stance *[MENA]* ... 18
Egypt: Musa Speaks on Peace, Arab Unity *[MENA]* ... 18
Egypt: Foreign Minister Musa Phones 'Arafat, Israel's Peres *[MENA]* ... 19
Egypt: Musa Meets With PLO's Qaddumi *[MENA]* ... 19
Egypt: Cabinet Reviews Israeli Election, Approves Press Law *[Cairo Radio]* ... 20
Egypt: Commentary Stresses Peace Process Will Not Stop *[Cairo Radio]* ... 21
Egypt: Envoy to Israel Views Peace After Likud Win *[Voice of the Arabs]* ... 22
Egypt: Parliamentarian Expects 'Difficulties' in Peace Talks *[MENA]* ... 23
Egypt: New Israeli Government Urged To Respect Peace Agreements *[MENA]* ... 23
Egypt: Writers Urge Arab Solidarity After Israeli Election *[MENA]* ... 23
Egypt: Papers View Peace Prospects After Israeli Elections *[MENA]* ... 24
Egypt: Paper Comments on Peace Process Under Likud Government *[MENA]* ... 25

Libya

Libya: 'Source' Denies Report of Attempt on al-Qadhdahfi's Life *[Cairo Radio]* ... 25

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

Bahrain: Iran Accused of Planning To Overthrow Government; Envoy Recalled *[AFP]* ... 26
Bahrain: Interior Ministry on Arrest of 'Hizballah of Bahrain' Group *[WAKH]* ... 26
Bahrain: Minister Reveals Plan To Install Pro-Iran Government *[WAKH]* ... 26
Bahrain: Envoy To Iran Withdrawn; Level of Diplomatic Ties Reduced *[WAKH]* ... 27
Bahrain: Consultative Council To Hold Extraordinary Session 4 Jun *[WAKH]* ... 27
Bahrain: Amir Urges Expansion of Shura Council Membership, Powers *[WAKH]* ... 27

Oman

Oman: GCC Stand Unchanged if Israel Continues Peace Commitment *[Muscat Radio]* ... 28

Qatar

Qatar: Government 'Studying' Results of Israeli Elections *[KUNA]* ... 28

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Papers on Riyadh Executions, Israeli Election Results *[SPA]* ... 29

Yemen

Yemen: Meeting Minutes for Eritrea Negotiations Signed With France *[Sanaa TV]* ... 29

IRAQ

Iraq: Saddam Chairs Joint Meeting on Implementing Oil Deal *[INA]* ... 30
Iraq: Al-Anbari Comments on Oil-for-Food Deal, Role of U.S. Firms *[INA]* ... 30
Iraq: Al-Anbari Interviewed on Deal With UN *[INA]* ... 31
Iraq: Oil Pipline, Pumping Facilities Tested 30 May *[INA]* ... 32
Iraq: Assembly Source Denies Statements on Ties With Jordan *[INA]* ... 33
Iraq: Radio—Netanyahu, Peres 'Two Sides of the Same Coin' *[Mother of Battles Radio]* ... 33
Iraq: Explosions Damage Planes at Tikrit Air Base *[Voice of Iraqi People]* ... 34
Iraq: Government Artillery Shells Kurdish Town 30 May *[Voice of the People of Kurdistan]* ... 34

ISRAEL

Israel: Netanyahu Vows To Seek Peace, Unity, Security *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 35

Israel: Peres Congratulates Netanyahu on Election Results *[Tel Aviv Radio]* ... 37
Israel: Clinton Calls Netanyahu, Extends Invitation *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 37
Israel: Clinton Said 'Shocked' by Results; Ross Planning Visit *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 37
Israel: Netanyahu States Commitment to Peace to Mubarak, Husayn *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 38
Israel: Musa Congratulates Netanyahu, Extends Invitation *[Tel Aviv Radio]* ... 38
Israel: Netanyahu Aide 'Contacts' PA, Asserts Commitment to Peace *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 38
Israel: Netanyahu Media Adviser Repeats Commitment to Peace *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 38
Israel: Netanyahu Aides on Reconsidering Hebron Issue *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 38
Israel: Likud Official—Oslo Agreements Will Not Be Cancelled *[Brussels Radio]* ... 39
Israel: Jerusalem Mayor Believes Netanyahu To Close Orient House *[Tel Aviv Radio]* ... 39
Israel: Shin Bet Warns of Terror Attacks Following Election *[MA'ARIV 2 Jun]* ... 39
Israel: Sources See Intifadah if Orient House Closed *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 39
Israel: Netanyahu Appoints Team To Handle Coalition Contacts *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 39
Israel: Meridor on Coalition, 'Realistic' Peace Talks *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 40
Israel: NRP, SHAS Leaders Call For 'Legislative' Knesset *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 41
Israel: NRP Rejects Netanyahu Key for Portfolio Distribution *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 41
Israel: Likud Plans for Coalition Negotiations Detailed *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 41
Israel: Peres Said 'Firmly Opposed' to Unity Government *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 42
Israel: Ramon Criticizes Baraq, Rejects 'Unity' Government *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 42
Israel: Shahal—Labor Belongs in Opposition Not Unity Government *[Tel Aviv Radio]* ... 43
Israel: Israeli Arabs Express Satisfaction With Netanyahu Speech *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 44
Israel: Likud Official on Negotiating With Palestinians *[Brussels Radio]* ... 44
Israel: Mordekhay Seeks Formula To Curb Israeli Arab Voting Power *[HATZOFE 2 Jun]* ... 44
Israel: Nabulus, Janin Open to Israelis *[Tel Aviv Radio]* ... 45
Israel: Peres—Hebron Redeployment Up to New Government *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 45
Israel: Workers Allowed Into Jewish Settlements *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 45
Israel: Chief of Staff Orders Slowdown in Palestinian Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* ... 45
Israel: Vote Breakdown Analyzed; Blank Slip 'Mystery' Noted *[Jerusalem TV]* ... 45

JORDAN

Jordan: Israel's Netanyahu Phones King, Discusses Peace Process *[Amman TV]* ... 47
Jordan: Husayn—Netanyahu Can Lead Israel to Peace *[MA'ARIV 2 Jun]* ... 47
Jordan: Prime Minister 'Confident' Peace Process To Continue *[Amman TV]* ... 48
Jordan: Information Minister—Peace Process 'Irreversible' *[Amman TV]* ... 48
Jordan: Prime Minister, al-Husayni View Likud's Election Win *[Amman Radio]* ... 49
Jordan: 'Possibility' Netanyahu May Attend Leaders Summit *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* ... 49
Jordan: Tripartite Summit Linked to Formation of Israeli Government *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* .. 49
Jordan: Minister Denies Postponement of Tripartite Summit *[Amman Radio]* ... 49
Jordan: Media Coverage of Official Reaction to Netanyahu Victory *[Amman Radio, etc.]* ... 50
Jordan: King Confirms Syrian Attempts To Carry Out 'Extremist Attacks' *[JORDAN TIMES 3 Jun]* 51
Jordan: Source Criticizes Statements by Syria's Talas Against Jordan *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* ... 52

LEBANON

Lebanon: Birri—Changing Israeli Prime Minister Makes No Difference *[Beirut Radio]* ... 53
Lebanon: Phalangists' Paqraduni Expects Syrian-Israeli Talks To Stop *[VOL]* ... 53
Lebanon: Buwayz Advises Wait-and-See Attitude Toward Netanyahu *[VOL]* ... 53
Lebanon: Hizballah Envoy in Tehran Comments on Israeli Elections *[Tehran International]* ... 53

SYRIA

Syria: Al-Asad Receives Clinton Letter on Commitment to Peace *[Damascus TV]* ... 54
Syria: Israeli Election Results 'Do Not Concern Syria' *[Damascus Radio]* ... 54
Syria: Country Said Not Concerned About Outcome of Israel Vote *[Damascus Radio]* ... 54

Syria: U.S. Urged To Resume Talks on Syrian, Lebanese Tracks *[SANA]* 55
Syria: Press Urges Israel To Return to 'Pillars' of Peace Process *[Damascus Radio]* 56
Syria: Press Calls For Unified Arab Stance on Peace Process *[Damascus Radio]* 56
Syria: Radio Reiterates Position on Israeli Election Results *[Damascus Radio]* 57
Syria: TISHRIN Analyzes Outcome of Israeli Elections *[Damascus Radio]* 58

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Daily Reports Taleban Leader Survived Coup Attempt *[IRNA]* 60
Afghanistan: Rabbani Calls On Jehadi Leaders To Take Steps for Peace *[Tehran Radio]* 60
Afghanistan: Taleban Forces Reportedly Capture Provincial Capital *[Moscow ITAR-TASS]* 60

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Wajed 'Fears Subtle Rigging' Set for Elections *[AFP]* 60
Bangladesh: Nationalist Party Presents Election Manifesto *[THE DAILY STAR 19 May]* 61

India

India: Prime Minister Views Government Stability, Economic Reform *[ASIA TIMES 3 Jun]* 62
India: New 21-Member United Front Ministry Sworn Into Office *[Delhi Radio]* 63
India: Portfolios of New Ministers Announced *[Delhi Radio]* 64
India: Snapshot of New Cabinet Members, Policies Provided *[THE HINDU 1 Jun]* 64
India: Communist Party To Join United Front Government *[Delhi Radio]* 66
India: More on Outgoing Prime Minister's Farewell Message *[THE HINDU 1 Jun]* 66
India: Congress Wins 4 Lok Sabha Seats in Kashmir *[Delhi Radio]* 67
India: Peace 'Gradually Returning' to Calcutta Outskirts; 5 Dead *[Delhi Radio]* 67

Iran

Iran: Radio Analyzes U.S. Motives in Allowing Sale of Iraqi Oil *[Tehran International]* 68
Iran: Threat of New Operations Against U.S. in Saudi Arabia *[Tehran International]* 68
Iran: Clinton Viewed as 'Main Loser' in Israeli Elections *[Tehran International]* 69
Iran: Israeli Election Result 'Victory' for Religious Extremists *[IRNA]* 69
Iran: Paper Attacks UK Minister's 'Hostile' Remarks *[TEHRAN TIMES 29 May]* 70
Iran: Agreement on Transit Fees for Kazakh Oil Reached *[IRNA]* 70
Iran: Role in Bahrain Unrest Denied *[KEYHAN 14 May]* 71
Iran: Official on Duties of Fifth Majles *[PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]* 73
Iran: Special News About Elections Reported *[PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]* 74
Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Majles Opening Ceremony *[IRNA]* 74
Iran: Khamene'i Message Read at Opening of Fifth Majles *[IRNA]* 75
Iran: Majles Elects Deputy Speakers, Secretaries, Commissioners *[Tehran Radio]* 76
Iran: Fatemeh Rafsanjani on Veiling *[London KEYHAN 9 May]* 76
Iran: Rafsanjani — Khomeyni Movement To Remain in History Forever *[IRNA]* 76
Iran: Society of Friends of United Nations Formed *[SOBH 26 May]* 77
Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU Replies to Press Supervisory Board *[SALAM 26 May]* 77
Iran: Ma'rufi To Stay Abroad for Some Time *[London KEYHAN 9 May]* 77
Iran: IRNA Sends Conflicting Reports *[PAYAM-E DANESHJU 5 Mar]* 78
Iran: Majles Denies Tehran Mayor Opportunity To Reply to Report *[KEYHAN 26 May]* 78
Iran: Arrests in Skirmishes With Basij *[London KEYHAN 2 May]* 78
Iran: Apr-May SAFF News, Events *[SAFF 21 Apr-20 May]* 78
Iran: Islamic Association Statement on 'Showdown' at University *[SALAM 25 May]* 81
Iran: Tehran Students Protest Against Hezbollah *[SALAM 25 May]* 82

Pakistan

Pakistan: President, Prime Minister Condemn Kashmir Elections *[Islamabad Radio]* 83

Pakistan: Official Notes 'Deteriorating' Rights Situation in Kashmir *[Islamabad TV]* 83
Pakistan: Pakistanis Deported From Saudi Arabia Detained in Bombay *[Islamabad Radio]* 83
Pakistan: 'Official Sources' Report 40 Mirages Purchased From France *[THE NEWS 31 May]* 83

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Government Efforts To End Electricity Strike Detailed *[DAILY NEWS 1 Jun]* 84
Sri Lanka: President Sees Electricity Strike as Opposition Conspiracy *[DAILY NEWS 1 Jun]* . 84
Sri Lanka: Opposition Criticizes President for Electricity Strike *[AFP]* 85

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Arab League Official Demands Israel 'Honor Commitments'

NC0106163296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Jun (MENA)—Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, assistant Arab league secretary general for political affairs, has commented on Benjamin Netanyahu's winning the Israeli elections and the effect this will have on the peace process. He said: We have to wait and see what Netanyahu will do from his place of responsibility, comparing what he said during his electoral campaign with what he will do as head of the new government.

He stressed the demand that Netanyahu honor commitments Israel made in the framework of the peace process, on all the tracks. He has to now represent not only Likud, but all Israelis, including the half that voted for Peres, al-'Allaf said.

He added that the world community expects Israeli leaders to demonstrate their commitment to the basic principles and resolutions on which the peace process was based. Now that the elections—which were taken as an excuse to freeze negotiations and postpone the implementation of Israel's pledges to the Palestinian side—are over, they have to work to implement the resolutions involving the Syrian and Lebanese sides, and to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region, he said.

Al-'Allaf underlined that what we need, after five years since the beginning the peace process, is to implement the resolutions on which this process was based and to provide the necessary conditions under which a just and comprehensive settlement can be achieved in the region.

Inter-Arab: Jordanian, PA Figures React to Likud Victory

NC3105204896 London MBC Television in Arabic 1705 GMT 31 May 96

[Interview via satellite link by Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council and head of its Political Committee, in Jerusalem, and Jordanian Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, in Amman, with MBC correspondent Tawfiq Jazulit, in London, and Voice of America Newscaster Muhammad al-Shinnawi, in Washington; from the "Dialogue With the West" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Jazulit] I direct my first question to Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi. First, I welcome you to the program. There is no doubt that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is very cautiously getting prepared to confront the new reality arising from the elections in Israel. We know that the slogans used by the Likud Bloc during the election campaign concentrated on the fact that it wants to slow down negotiations with you on the one hand, and then to allow the settlers to build new settlements. In addition, they consider Jerusalem the eternal capital of Israel. How, in your opinion, will the PA deal with the Likud government and its stance on negotiations with you?

['Ashrawi] First of all, we need to deal with this reality not through the preconceptions we have from statements made before the elections — either electioneering statements or statements from parties that were in opposition. In my opinion, when the Likud Party leads the country and becomes the ruling party, it will address the existing reality rather than cling to its doctrine and ideology.

Second, there are certain tangible facts that have to be addressed, such as withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, redeployment, and issues relating to Authority and the Palestinian elections. The Likud will be confronted with a Palestinian reality that will not be easy to change or ignore. There are also international commitments. There are treaties and pledges that have to be implemented. There is also an international will, in the sense that the peace process is not subject to the Likud's will alone. This means a kind of change or transformation in the rigid stance of the Likud and the rightist religious parties.

As a Palestinian body, we are first required to make new plans and strategies to gather our ranks internally — and we are actually doing so — and then to take into consideration all possibilities in our negotiation policy and formulate a policy for negotiations that can absorb these new developments. Another important point is our dealings with the Arab world. We need to establish a coordinated, united, and collective policy to confront the new challenges. We also need to cooperate with the international community in order to safeguard investments in peace and secure its true and effective intervention in this process, in order to establish a system of accountability or even arbitration, if that is needed.

[Jazulit] Thank you Dr. 'Ashrawi; we will come back to you later to discuss other matters regarding the PA. Now we will move on to Jordanian Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. I ask you the following: Thank you for agreeing to take part in this program. You must have heard—or more correctly, seen—the statement the Jordanian prime minister made yesterday to MBC in which he said, and I quote: I do not believe that the results of the Israeli elections will have any effect on Israeli-Jordanian relations. If we take into

Even in the recent elections, the Labor Party dropped its opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

We are now facing a new situation. The Likud said in its election campaign that the Jerusalem issue will not even be discussed, and it called for the expansion of settlements in the West Bank, refused to return the Golan Heights, and so on. Therefore there is a clear difference in these policies.

I am not among those who are urging the adoption of an emotional and somewhat panicky stand. There is no reason for panicking, as many are doing. There is a need to unite the ranks and make a clear strategy. A meeting will be held in al-'Aqabah on Wednesday [5 June]. It will be attended by President Husni Mubarak and President Yasir 'Arafat and hosted by his majesty the king. I hope that it will at least mark the start of a clear, intensive, and serious Arab action for coordination in the coming period. [passage omitted]

[Jazulit] The dialogue is continuing and our viewer Sa'id from London will ask a question. Please go ahead.

[Sa'id] Good evening, my question is for His Excellency Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. Keeping in mind that the relationship between Netanyahu and the Jordanian Government is stronger than the relationship between Netanyahu and the Palestinian National Authority and the other Arab governments, if Netanyahu's government invites Jordan to negotiate over the future of the West Bank, Jerusalem, and perhaps Gaza, will the Jordanian Government agree to do this? If Netanyahu's government announces that it will not negotiate over this issue except with Jordan, what will Jordan's position be? I would like Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi to comment on Dr. al-Mu'ashshir's answer.

[Jazulit] This makes it two questions. At any rate, it is a good question that is addressed to his excellency the minister. Please go ahead.

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Actually Jordan's position on this issue is firm and does not depend on which Israeli party is in power. Perhaps you all remember that while the Israeli Labor Party was in power, it extended such an invitation to Jordan to participate in the negotiations alongside the Palestinians or to enter into some form of federation with the Palestinians before the conclusion of the process of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. Jordan made its position clear when the Labor Party was in power and is reiterating it now. Jordan does not wish at all...

[Jazulit, interrupting] We thank the Jordanian minister. I address a question now to Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi although it has no connection with the question posed by viewer Sa'id in London. Dr. Hanan, you made numerous concessions during earlier negotiations with the Israelis, and now you are about to begin the final and decisive phase of negotiations with the Israelis. Are you ready to make any new concessions in connection with the Palestinian people's legitimate rights?

['Ashrawi] First of all, I believe that the Israeli Labor Party's policies and behavior constituted a flaw in the negotiating process, affected the general political situation, and in turn led to the Likud's victory. I mean that the Labor Party did not act quickly on certain vital issues in a way that would have changed the facts and imposed new irreversible realities. The peace process under the Labor Party was also subject to external considerations and was governed by the narrow, selfish objectives of the Labor Party.

I say this with total frankness: The Palestinians devoted much of their political statements and even some of their decisions to boosting the Labor Party. It should not have happened in this way. The Labor Party weakened the peace process and delayed it until after the elections on the assumption that it was returning to power. Had Peres handled the requirements of the peace process promptly and earnestly, the situation would now be different. In my opinion, we need to formulate well-organized strategies. We have nothing to concede. Everything that was said before and all the former political maneuvers were connected with a transitional period subject to change in the context of a continuing peace process. Now as we begin the permanent status negotiations, we are dealing with vital issues on which no concessions can be made, including self-determination, sovereignty, and the establishment of a Palestinian state. They are the key to a solution, really.

[Jazulit] You are not ready then to make any concessions in these negotiations?

['Ashrawi] Not in connection with the essential issues such as Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a Palestinian city, the capital of Palestine. This is not a mere slogan, but a demand. Again the establishment of a Palestinian state is connected with the right to self-determination. The refugee issue and the right of return is an essential issue that must be resolved. If we do not handle these matters responsibly and earnestly, this means that there will be no peace in the future.

[Jazulit] Thank you, Dr. Hanan. [passage omitted]

[Jazulit] We continue this episode in which we discuss the results of the Israeli elections and their repercussions on the Middle East peace process saga. We are still receiving calls. We have viewer Sa'dun from London with us now. Please go ahead, brother Sa'dun.

[Sa'dun] This question is for brother Marwan al-Mu'ashshir. After Netanyahu becomes prime minister, the peace negotiations might collapse. Do the Arab parties have an alternative to the negotiations? Will Amman maintain its relations with Tel Aviv in case the negotiations collapse?

[Jazulit] We thank the viewer Sa'dun. Mr. Minister, apparently you are drawing the viewers' attention. Most of the questions are addressed to you. Please answer.

[Al-Mu'ashshir] The fact is that Jordan signed a peace treaty with the State of Israel, not the Labor Party, and hence the treaty will not be affected by any Israeli domestic changes. What I would like to say is that the important thing is not simply to sign treaties but to establish a climate of total peace that will reach all the region's nations—that is, if we want this region to be stable and to prosper. Therefore, Jordan is very interested in the attainment of such a comprehensive peace and the resumption of the talks on all the remaining negotiating tracks. Otherwise we will not be able to attain the peace that we all want. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab: GCC Ministerial Council Issues Press Statement

LD0306110296 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
1540 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 2 June (SPA) — Their highnesses and excellencies the foreign ministers of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] concluded today the proceedings of the 59th session of the GCC's ministerial council at the General Secretariat in Riyadh.

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal headed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's delegation. At the end of its 59th session, the council has issued the following press statement:

The ministerial council has held its 29th session on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th Muharram 1417 AH, corresponding to 1-2 June 1996, at the general-secretariat in Riyadh, under the chairmanship of His Highness Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, in the presence of their highnesses and excellencies. [passage omitted]

Cooperation process: The ministerial council expressed its deep satisfaction at the statement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the state of Qatar agreeing to finish the demarcation of borders, resume proceedings of the Joint Technical Committee in order to chose one of the international survey companies, and set up the technical specifications to determine the border points between the two brotherly countries on the spot.

The council also welcomed bilateral agreements between some of the member states allowing nationals to travel between some of the member sates with identity cards. The council is looking forward to see all member states follow their sister countries which, in this context, had taken the practical steps.

The council stressed the importance of these steps and their consequences on the reinforcement of the joint action's process in all fields. These being a materialization of the orientations and expectations of the GCC's leaders and peoples.

The GCC Council of Ministers expressed its satisfaction with the signing of the understanding agreement between Iraq and the United Nations, in accordance with the decision 986 of the UN Security Council [UNSC], which concerns the satisfying of the humanitarian and medical needs of the Iraqi people and with the ending of its suffering. The Iraqi Government bears alone the responsibility for this suffering, because it refused to implement this decision, which was issued two years ago. This has deprived the Iraqi people of these needs for no reason.

It also expresses its great appreciation for the efforts deployed by the UN secretary-general and the efforts made by the UN negotiating team and for the support provided by the UNSC members for the success of these negotiations. It hopes that this agreement would pave the way for the implementation of all the UNSC decisions by Iraq, particularly those related to the release of Kuwaiti war prisoners and the detainees of other nationalities. It also hopes that Iraq would pay compensation to Kuwait and return its possessions and refrain from any aggression and provocation in accordance with Resolution 949.

It also calls on the Iraqi assembly to carry on with the implementation of its other important commitments in accordance with the UNSC resolutions concerning the banning of weapons of mass destruction, by allowing the international team of inspectors to carry out its task aiming at removing all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

In this regard, the Council expresses its readiness to continue to support the efforts deployed by the UN special commission on the removal of weapons of mass destruction, politically and financially. It calls on the international community to participate effectively in the efforts of the commission with all possible means in order to help it achieve its goals of establishing peace and stability in the region.

The Council stresses its rejection of any policy aiming at undermining the regional unity of Iraq, and expressed its strong attachment to the sovereignty of Iraq and its territorial integrity.

The Council expressed its condemnation and rejection of the irresponsible statements made by President al-Qadhdhafi [title as received] in Cairo recently and which aimed at undermining the independence and sovereignty of the State of Kuwait. These statement are against the norms and principles on which relations between states are based.

Relations with the Iranian Islamic Republic and the issue of the occupation of the three islands belonging to the UAE: The ministerial council reviewed the development of events concerning the relations of the GCC member countries with the Iranian Islamic Republic and the issue of the latter's occupation of the three islands: the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa, which belong to the UAE. The council noted that the Iranian Government continued taking measures meant to entrench its occupation of the three islands, in a persisting policy of imposing a fait accompli by force. Iran first opened an airport in Abu Musa island on 10 March 1996 and a power station in Greater Tunb island on 14 April 1996, then on 19 May 1996 it announced the construction of a new maritime harbour in Abu Musa island, which was due to be completed this year. This shows Iran's persistence in continuing its unwarranted provocative acts.

The ministerial council was informed of the protest notes sent by the UAE government to the Iranian government over these measures, and it expressed its great regret to see the Iranian government still refusing to respond to the serious and sincere calls repeatedly made by the UAE to resolve this dispute by peaceful means. The ministerial council voiced its condemnation of the successive Iranian measures in the islands belonging to the UAE, and its continuing concern over the consequences of the Iranian government persisting in its policy of imposing fait accompli by force. This means violation of the sovereignty of the UAE, an encroachment on its rights to these islands, and it exposes the security and stability in the region to danger. It means also going against the principles and rules of the international law, the charters of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the principles of good neighborliness and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states of the region.

The ministerial council reaffirms its firm support for the UAE and all the peaceful measures and means it takes to retrieve its sovereignty over the three islands: the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa. The council also reiterates its call for Iran to accept referring the dispute to the International Court of Justice. The council stresses that the security of the GCC member states is indivisible, and it asks Iran not to interfere in the internal affairs of Bahrain and the GCC member states, not to resort to, or encourage acts of sabotage, and to respect the sovereignty of the GCC member states and their independence. The council also expresses its concern over the efforts of the Iranian Islamic Republic feverishly seeking to possess and build armament capabilities far beyond the the needs of the known and internationally accepted legitimate traditional defence capabilities, a matter that constitutes a serious threat to security and stability in this region. In this respect, the council urges the international community and the ad hoc international organizations to make efforts aimed at making the Gulf region free of arms of mass destruction.

The ministerial council discussed new developments in the Middle East peace process on the basis of its firm stances in support of the realization of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the the Madrid peace conference as a point of reference — particularly UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 — and the principle of land-for-peace, in a way that would ensure the ending of Israeli occupation of all the occupied Arab territories and enabling the Palestinian people to exercise the legitimate rights, including self-determination and the establishment of their independent state in their national territory.

The ministerial council reaffirmed its firm stance in support of the Syrian call for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan heights to the border line of 4 June 1967.

While renewing its strong condemnation of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and reaffirming its full support for and solidarity with the brotherly Lebanese people, the ministerial council stresses again the need for commitment to the understanding reached on 27 April 1996 and for that to be regarded as an initial step towards the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 425, and it urges the UN Security Council to make Israel pay the compensation required to rebuild the installations, infrastructure and human lives destroyed by Israeli attacks.

In the light of the Israeli elections, the ministerial council stressed the need for the next Israeli Government to be totally and thoroughly committed to the implementation of all the agreements reached to achieve peace in the Middle East, in view of this being a strategic option and any retraction from which must not accepted.

In this context, the ministerial council urged the sponsors of the Madrid peace conference, particularly the United States, to do their utmost to maintain the continuance of the peace process, to ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreements, to progress earnestly towards reaching the final phase of the negotiations which include important and fundamental issues, foremost among which being the issue of Jerusalem, settlements, refugees and final status of occupied Palestinian territories, as well as speeding up the resumption of the Syrian and Lebanese tracks to ensure a substantial progress that would contribute towards the establishment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Council of Ministers stresses that extremism, violence and terrorism are international phenomena and are not restricted to a particular people or region. The GCC renews its condemnation and rejection of these phenomena and its rejection of all kinds of violence and terrorism, particularly those which are undermining security and stability in the region [Middle East]. It calls on the international community to coordinate its efforts in the fight against violence and terrorism and make sure that those responsible for such actions are brought before the courts, as well as prevent extremists and terrorists from using the territory of any country to obtain supplies or weapons, and from using the media to publish propaganda encouraging violent and terrorist actions.

The Council of Ministers expressed its satisfaction with the arrest of those responsible for the attack with explosives in the al-Ulayya district by the Saudi security services, wishing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its government and people, peace and stability under the leadership of the custodian of the two holy mosques.

The Council renews its full support for the State of Bahrain and for the measures Bahrain has taken to strengthen security and stability, on the basis of the common destiny of the Council's members, their common security and the defense of their stability. [passage omitted]

The Council of Ministers also examined the dispute between the Republic of Yemen and Eritrea over the Hanish islands, and expressed its satisfaction with the agreement reached by the two countries on 4th of Muharram 1417, corresponding to 21st May 1996, to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict over the territorial sovereignty of the two countries through international arbitration. The GCC praised the efforts deployed by international mediators in general and France in particular to reach this agreement. [passage omitted]

In implementation of the resolution of the higher council's 16th session held in the Sultanate of Oman from 4-6 December 1995, their highnesses and excellencies, the GCC's foreign ministers and ministers of finance and economy, held their 7th meeting at the General-Secretariat in Riyadh on Sunday 15th Muharram, 1417 AH, corresponding to 1 June 1996, to discuss unification of customs' tariffs of the GCC's member states vis-a-vis the outside world.

After discussing the secretariat's memorandum on the subject of the unification of customs' tariffs, the ministers have decided to charge the secretary-general with carrying out contacts with the member states in order to discuss the best ways to agree on the proposals contained in the General-Secretariat's memorandum and put forward their perceptions to another joint meeting of the ministerial council and the Committee for Financial and Economic cooperation due in September 96.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives 'Important' Message From Clinton

JN0106143096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received an important written message from U.S. President Bill Clinton emphasizing the U.S. support for the peace process and the Palestinian people and their efforts to realize their hopes and aspirations.

The message, which was conveyed by U.S. Consul-General Edward Abington, expressed the U.S. Administration's commitment to realize just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The president received Abington at the Presidential Office in Gaza today. They discussed the latest political developments and issues of bilateral interest.

President Yasir 'Arafat received a phone call from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. Talks dealt with political developments in the region.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Tibi—'Arafat Not To Resign Despite 'Bitter News'

TA0106120996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, adviser to PA President Yasir 'Arafat, by 'Adi Talmor; place and date not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Talmor] Shalom, Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, Yasir 'Arafat's special adviser. Are you still head of the Arab Union for Renewal? Does the movement still exist?

[Al-Tibi] It not only exists, but we now have greater motivation to strengthen our branches and expand our activities. We dropped out of the race, but we still have extensive support in the Arab sector. We took this move, which is unprecedented in Israeli Arab politics, because we wanted as many Arab Knesset members [MK's] as possible to enter the Knesset and to avoid losing Arab votes in these sensitive times.

[Talmor] What do you have to say in reaction to the very grave accusations heard in Labor that by casting blank ballots, the Arabs brought about Netanyahu's election?

[Al-Tibi] These remarks were made by Ra'anan Kohen, and his motives for attacking the Arab sector are prejudiced. This man's motives are suspect. Undoubtedly, the main reason for Shim'on Peres' failure to be elected is that 11 percent more Jewish voters preferred Bibi Netanyahu. That is all. As an Arab, however, I cannot settle for that. I believe a number of mistakes were made by a number of Arab public figures. One of these was the call to cast a blank slip made a month or a month and a half ago. That call was revoked in vague and confusing terms only two or three days before the elections, when some Arab leaders urged the public to vote for Shim'on Peres and others said not to vote for the right wing, to block the right wing. The latter found it difficult to even utter Shim'on Peres' name. The Arab citizens are not a herd. A month ago, they were told that Shim'on Peres was a murderer and a war criminal, and two days before the elections — even on the very afternoon of election day — they were told to do everything to prevent Bibi Netanyahu's rise to power.

[Talmor] Do you see the Arab party leaders as responsible?

[Al-Tibi] Every Arab MK who called for casting a blank ballot facilitated the right wing's rise to power and implicitly endorsed the inaction of those Arab citizens who preferred to stay away from the Knesset elections. The Arab voting rate was 77-78 percent, and that was an increase compared with the previous elections, but we all expected the rate to be higher. [passage omitted]

[Talmor] Dr. al-Tibi, have you had a chance to discuss the matter with Yasir 'Arafat?

[Al-Tibi] I certainly have. We speak several times a day.

[Talmor] What was his reaction?

[Al-Tibi] Look, it was bitter news for him, both personally and politically. Shim'on Peres is a personal acquaintance of his. They came a long way together over the past two or three years, they were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together, and they had every intention of continuing the political process through permanent status talks and of bringing about a historic resolution of the conflict. It would be quite accurate to say that the Palestinian side is concerned about the future of the negotiations in view of the statements made only yesterday by three or four senior Likud officials, who said the Oslo accords should be reopened. [passage omitted]

[Talmor] I would like to remind you, Dr. al-Tibi, that Shim'on Peres' political fate has often been linked in various statements to the political fate of Yasir 'Arafat. Can we assume that if Peres loses the premiership, 'Arafat will renounce his position at the Palestinian Authority [PA]?

[Al-Tibi] As you know, Yasir 'Arafat was elected by the Palestinian people and not by the public in Ashqelon or Ashdod, which failed to elect Shim'on Peres. By the way, the Palestinian people opted for peace, while the Jewish people in the State of Israel chose Ari'el Sharon, Refa'el Eytan, and Tzahi Hanegbi. There is some food for thought there. The PA, headed by Yasir 'Arafat, is committed to the political process and will hold talks with any elected government. Today, the elected government is headed by Bibi Netanyahu, and the PA wishes to pursue the negotiations with that government, too. I was glad to hear Mr. Bibi Netanyahu's statement, as relayed to Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] through his political aide, and I imagine channels of communication will be established in the coming days. Judging by the Netanyahu statement conveyed to the PA, a proper, official negotiating team will be set up after a government is established. I hope Bibi Netanyahu will rise above the belligerent declarations of some Likud leaders.

[Talmor] Thank you very much, Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi.

Palestinian Affairs: Netanyahu Adviser Telephones PLO's 'Abbas

JN0106062596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, received a telephone call from Dore Gold, adviser to Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu, last night. Gold emphasized Netanyahu's commitment to the peace process. He noted that immediately after its formation, the new Israeli government will work out a mechanism for resumption of political negotiations with the PLO.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray'—Talks Require New Approach, New Team, New Venue

TA0206122396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Report on telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, by Yasir 'Atilyah; place and date not given; from the "With the Midday Events" program — italicized passages recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Atilyah] Ahmad Quray', Abu-'Ala', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, says that the outcome of the elections for the post of Israeli prime minister is an Israeli choice and that we respect the Israeli people's will but will deal with it through our firm stance. Peace is the will of both sides, the option of the two peoples, and the result of tireless negotiations.

[Quray'] *Consequently, if the new Israeli Government wishes to pursue this option, it is our strategic option as well and we will also pursue it. If, however, they adopt different slogans, different positions, and different policies, we will naturally deal in a completely different way.*

[Atilyah] Our firm position is that any just peace should ensure....

[Quray', broadcast in progress] *...the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the right of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and homes or receive compensation for those who do not wish to do so. This is the Palestinian position on whose basis we launched the negotiations in Oslo. This is the Palestinian position on whose basis the Oslo process has continued. It is a process based on stages and [word indistinct]. We must begin the negotiations and complete the talks now on this basis. This is the position on whose basis we will negotiate with the new government, if it wants to proceed with these talks. Therefore, our position is firm.*

[Atilyah] We began our negotiations with the Labor Party as enemies and turned into two understanding sides. We went through a long series of exhaustive negotiations that led to successive agreements. Common denominators of understanding were created between the two sides. We came to realize their limits, and they realized ours.

[Quray'] *Now, there is a new stage requiring a new negotiating strategy on the basis of the principles which I mentioned. This stage also requires new negotiating teams.*

[Atilyah] The new strategy means everything, says Ahmad Quray', Abu-'Ala'. It means changing the negotiating approach and policy, the individuals, the venue of the negotiations, and the information technique. These issues are being examined. Furthermore, we are examining the extent to which we can rely on the Arab and international sides and coordinate with them, as well as our reliance on the Palestinian people and their participation in the peace process. All Palestinian forces should be represented in the final stage talks.

Commenting on remarks by some Likud Party members who suggested, for example, putting off the redeployment in Hebron, Quray' said: I hope those remarks were uttered within the framework of the election campaign, because if they represent a real position, this is a catastrophe.

[Quray'] *Those who talk about expanding the settlements or setting up new settlements are actually wielding knives and cutting the throat of the peace process, slaughtering it. This is inconceivable, impossible.*

[Atilyah] Quray' strongly protested the fact that the Labor government has not honored its commitment to redeploy in Hebron. He called on it to implement the redeployment before it vacates the Prime Minister's Office; otherwise, it will be evading its responsibility. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Views Impact of Israeli Election Results

JN0206142096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0415 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, in Gaza by Fathi al-Barqawi in the Jericho Studio; from the "A New Day" feature — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Barqawi] First of all, we will ask Ahmad Quray', Abu-Ala', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council [PLC] about the implications of the Israeli election results?

[Quray'] No doubt, a new phase has just begun, and perhaps there will be a new approach and method as well. In spite of many reservations, I do not know if this will be followed by new developments which could have an impact on the entire peace process. It is well known that when they were leading the opposition movement in Israel, or during the elections campaign, the Israeli Likud and right wing made proposals which should not be listened to, let alone be accepted. We categorically reject their proposals on issues such as Jerusalem, the settlements, and security measures; we refuse to even listen to such proposals.

Our position is clear. We believe it is the right of the Israelis to make their choice. We do not choose the Israeli Government. It is the Israeli people who make such a choice. However, one thing should be taken into account: We were committed, and still are, to this peace process. We were also committed, and still are, to the regulations, and terms of this process. We will remain committed provided that the Israeli side shows a similar commitment to this process, its terms, and its rules.

Currently, there are two requirements. The first has to do with interim agreement issues. Their implementation must continue with respect to withdrawal from Hebron, the safe passage, issues related to zone B and its transformation into zone A, and deadlines within the next month — namely, handing over one third of zone C to the Palestinian Authority. The same applies to the free movement of people and goods, and other economic matters. All these issues are obligations the new Israeli Government must fulfill if it wants this process to survive.

The other requirement is related to the final-status negotiations. The Israelis should not rush to make unilateral decisions regarding these negotiations and their results. This is something we cannot accept at all.

Therefore, I would say that this is a new phase that requires a new Palestinian policy and a more clear-cut, determined, and resolute negotiations strategy on all the fundamental issues. We should not abandon and declare our positions on the final status issues such as Jerusalem, the settlements, the borders, sovereignty, or the refugees and their right to repatriation [sentence as heard]. This was discussed during a joint meeting of the PLO Executive Committee, the Palestinian National Authority, and the PLC Speaker's office. The general approach within this framework and the statement issued genuinely, faithfully, and seriously express the Palestinian leadership's vision regarding this coming phase.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Abu-'Ala' you said there should be a clearer, firmer, and more resolute Palestinian strategy vis-a-vis Jerusalem, the settlements, and security measures. Our position on these issues is clear. The position of Netanyahu, the Likud, and the Israeli side was clear. The Palestinian negotiator, therefore, is about to embark on an extremely difficult task.

[Quray'] The Palestinian negotiator's task was never an easy job at any point in the past. We started out in our negotiations with the Labor party as enemies, but we ended up as partners who were able to reach an understanding. Perhaps now we will begin our negotiations with the Likud as enemies. This is understandable because up to this point, their declared positions are not in line with the Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

There are certain issues that do not require much interpretation. However, other issues in the Oslo agreement were postponed and not overlooked as some people claim. These issues were postponed so there would be enough time for more in-depth discussions of all aspects of the Palestinian question — this is the real issue. Let us take the issue of the refugees for instance. The Palestinians will never accept anything less than what was agreed upon in the United Nations regarding this issue. Neither will they accept anything less than what Israel agreed to when it first joined the United Nations and was accepted as a member — namely, Resolution 194 stipulating the right of refugees to repatriation or compensation for those who do not want to return.

This is our stand; it is absolutely not subject to any bargaining. We also cannot accept Israel making a case of the other issues, such as the issue of Jerusalem or the settlements. No matter how many settlements they plant, the land will remain a Palestinian land. They will have to leave it if they want peace. They are only an occupation force. Their presence in the West Bank and even in the Gaza Strip is that of an occupation force, nothing else. If they want to forge a real, comprehensive, and lasting peace they will have to leave these positions as they were in 1967. They must do this if we are to discuss all aspects of the Palestinian issue, including the refugees issue, which is the most intricate and difficult issue. This is the most important and difficult issue as it embodies the Palestinians' right to repatriation or to compensation for those who do not wish to return.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Abu-'Ala', you spoke about the Labor Party. In this respect, we must mention Shim'on Peres, who did not fulfill his promises on Hebron.

[Quray'] It is regrettable that he procrastinated on the implementation. Redeployment was supposed to occur on 26 March. Peres procrastinated and maneuvered, and the redeployment was postponed. This is unacceptable. We should have been more vocal in rejecting any postponement of the Hebron redeployment as this was settled in the agreement. It is impermissible to reopen the agreement either for further negotiations or for postponement of the implementation timetable. What Peres announced — I do not know whether this is true or not ... [pauses]. He can evacuate Hebron today; it is a one-day operation. I believe the Peres government still has the time to do so. He must end many outstanding issues because the agreement was signed with a government that represents the Israeli people. We do not deal with a Labor or Likud government. We deal with an Israeli Government that has Knesset approval. Peres can end the Hebron issue, the issue of the safe passage, and the issue of Zone B which was supposed to have been concluded three months after the election of the Palestinian Legislative Council. This is what the agreement stipulates. There are other issues, as well.

[Al-Barqawi] It is no secret that many observers say that we have given the Labor Party and Shim'on Peres much more than they deserve. We used to describe this as a pragmatic policy.

[Quray'] The truth is that the yardstick is not what we have given and not given. The issue is that we have a cause and have rights. We dealt with the Israeli Government as partners on a very sensitive issue. They were the ones who procrastinated. We were not the ones who allowed them to postpone the redeployment or the safe passage. They were the ones who procrastinated. We should raise our voices loud. We should not accept failure to implement provisions of the agreement. We also should not accept that issues from the transition phase be postponed for the final-status negotiations. If this happens, then it will be at the expense of the final-status issues.

[Al-Barqawi] Can the Arab stand help bring pressure to bear on the new Israeli Government?

[Quray'] There is no doubt about this. I view the Arab stand as a supportive stand; we depend on it. As I mentioned, we now face a new stage. We are still exploring the actual policy of the new Israeli Government. Will it abide by the peace process? Will it circumvent the peace process? We do not pay attention to random statements by members of the new government coalition. We will wait for this government to define its policy. Then, we will decide what to do. During the first stage of the peace process, many Arab countries established relations with Israel, such as representation offices. I believe these countries will define their stands on whether they will go on along this road in light of the new Israeli Government's stand.

[Al-Baraqwi] This is what we expect, or at least hope for. Thank you, and good morning Brother Abu-'Ala'.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Tibi Disappointed With Netanyahu's 'Hesitant' Speech

TA0206192196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, expressed disappointment with Netanyahu's speech. He told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the speech was hesitant with regard to the Palestinians. Al-Tibi said that Netanyahu will soon learn that without the PLO and 'Arafat, there will be neither peace nor stability in the region.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser Views 'Negative Impact' of Netanyahu Win

JN3105182896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1540 GMT 31 May 96

[Interview with Ahmad al-Tibi, leader of the Arab Movement for Change and adviser to PA President Yasir 'Arafat, by Salim Badawi in Israel on 31 May; from the "Week's Event" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Tibi] I believe the new situation will have a negative impact on the political and peace processes and the Israeli-Palestinian track in particular and the Israeli-Arab track in general. I do not believe that Binyamin Netanyahu will declare his abandonment of the accords, to which the Israeli Government committed itself. He will, however, pursue the right-wing's policy of dealing with these accords. Palestinians in general fear that this will affect several issues such as the withdrawal from Hebron and release of prisoners, as well as the topics of the final-status talks such as Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, and the border. The right wing will deal with all these issues in a tough manner. So, there is no doubt that the political process will suffer a setback. However, there is an international commitment — and this is an important point — to the political process in the region. We hope that this commitment will compel the leaders of the Israeli right wing to pursue this path, despite the expected slow pace.

[Badawi] Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, do you expect any change in Israel's domestic policy and its political map following the failure of Shim'on Peres?

[Al-Tibi] I believe that Bibi Netanyahu will be able to form a right-wing coalition government easily. The question is: Will Bibi Netanyahu form a national coalition government with influential figures from the Labor Party like Ehud Baraq, Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, Shohat, and others, excluding Shim'on Peres? So, we will wait for a week or so to see what Netanyahu will do. We also have the religious and social aspect of the Jewish society, and the Jewish secular society are afraid that there will be negative developments in this regard. The Palestinian Arab masses, including myself, inside the green line also fear the Israeli right wing's policy toward these masses and the peace process. I would like to say that the number of the Arab Knesset members increased, but regrettably, they will not be influential as the upcoming right-wing government will not assign any political role to the Arabs.

[Badawi] Do you expect the Labor Party to see certain changes in the medium-term?

[Al-Tibi] The big tragedy is that Shim'on Peres has never won in any election campaign. He always arrives at the threshold but does not enter the house. Therefore, I will not be surprised if there is a shakeup among Labor Party leaders, and new camps are established as a result of the failure of the Labor Party. For example, Hayim Ramon's camp will be attacked by Ehud Baraq, Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, and others from the Labor party. These camps will weaken the party for some time. I believe that Shim'on Peres, regrettably, will be forced to leave politics.

[Badawi] Thanks Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Asfur—Palestinians Not To Allow 'Foot-Dragging' in Talks

TA0106122996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hanan 'Asfur, secretary of the Palestinian team negotiating with Israel, has called on the new government to continue the peace process with the Palestinians. 'Asfur said that the Palestinians will not permit any foot-dragging in the negotiations. He urged Israel to redeploy its forces in Hebron as agreed. 'Asfur added that the Palestinians are not distressed by the Likud's ascension to power. In his opinion, the Arab world and the international community have a responsibility to make sure the peace process continues. This was reported by our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet, PLO Executive Committee Discuss Election Results

JN3105185896 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 31 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat chaired a joint meeting of the cabinet and the PLO Executive Committee this evening.

The discussion during the meeting which is still under way focuses on the developments of the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track, the results of the Israeli elections, and a host of economic issues and topics listed on the agenda.

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's Qaddumi Comments on Israeli Elections

NC3105190896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1805 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, arrived in Cairo tonight from Amman on a visit of several days to Egypt.

Qaddumi stated on arrival that he will meet with a number of Egyptian officials for consultations and coordination on the Palestinian issue, especially considering the difficult circumstances facing the entire region, the latest of which were the Israeli elections, the post-election expectations, and their effects on the peace process in light of Binyamin Netanyahu's expected victory.

He added that he will also discuss ways of strengthening joint Arab action, Arab solidarity, the endeavors to clear the Arab atmosphere and get backing for the Palestinian track in order to reach the objectives set out by the peace settlement.

Qaddumi went on to say that the extremist and religious forces' capturing a large number of seats in the Israeli Knesset means that the two main parties have lost many seats. Shim'on Peres' expected defeat is a personal defeat, while Netanyahu is known from his official statements to be an extremist to the right of the Labor Party. He added: There are no essential differences between the Labor and Likud Parties. The difference is in the tactics and the way of formulating their ideas on the settlements and other issues. He referred to comments that Netanyahu will not find it easy to continue with the peace process, and said neither will it be easy for him to return to square one.

Qaddumi noted that the Likud is ready to enter into a national coalition government in Israel so as to continue with the peace process, according to its plans that assert that there will be no negotiations over Jerusalem and that settlements will continue to be built as if the Palestinian people have no rights to this land. This cannot be done or attempted because it conflicts with the nature of the whole historic process and will have negative consequences for Israel alone.

The PLO official stressed that the internal contradictions in Israel will continue as a result of the differences between the various parties, the decrease in the two major parties' influence, and the success of the extremist parties. He said that this shows that the notion of peace has not yet matured or changed Israeli society, while concept of the settlements and the seizure of land continues to prevail in that society.

Regarding the question of Arab action in reaction to the Israeli election results, he said: Not only to the elections, because we essentially do not differentiate between the Likud and Labor policies. The Labor Party's policy was characterized by some flexibility that deceived many Arabs and other countries that support the peace process. He added: There are Arab conditions that need to be dealt with. These are: First, clearing the atmosphere among Arabs, holding an Arab summit to preserve the process of Arab solidarity, and a return to coordination, particularly on fundamental issues that concern the Arabs and Muslims, such as the refugees, Jerusalem, and the settlements, which the Palestine leadership cannot solve alone.

He expressed his belief that these issues will proceed slowly and stressed the grave need for Arab solidarity, particularly as there are deteriorating Arab situations and this could be an incentive for the Arabs to unite and become strong.

He underlined the need to overcome many of the negative consequences of the Gulf war and expressed his belief that the time has come for Arab tolerance and for sitting at one table.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Ashrawi—Netanyahu 'Will Try To Deal With Realities'

JN3105141496 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 31 May 96

[Telephone Interview with Hanan 'Ashrawi, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, by Kamal Tarabayh in the Paris studios; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Tarabayh] Do the Palestinian people and leadership expect more difficulties in dealing with Binyamin Netanyahu?

['Ashrawi] The election of Netanyahu and the Likud Party means a shift in the Israeli political position and plans toward the right, toward extremism, and even toward ideologism. However, we do not confuse Likud's utterances during its opposition days or its pre-election rhetoric on the one hand and a well-planned and balanced political program on the other. Political rhetoric of course causes fear of what the Likud party will try to do. However, we deal with reality. This reality tells us that there is an international determination to establish genuine peace, there are agreements signed by the Israeli Government, and it is obliged to implement them, there is international commitment to protect the peace process. There is an internal Israeli opposition which constitutes almost half of the people. This opposition is supportive of the continuation of the peace process. Therefore, Netanyahu and his party will not work in a vacuum or without accountability.

[Tarabayh] It is well known that the Likud bloc, like other parties, contains various trends. There are the so-called hawks and the less hardline groups. In your opinion, will Netanyahu take a middle-of-the-road stand?

['Ashrawi] In my view, Binyamin Netanyahu will benefit from his experience. As I said, the opposition election rhetoric differs from the real thing. When someone assume responsibilities, he works on established facts. He will not impose his views or concepts on reality. In my opinion, Netanyahu, as an individual, will try to deal with realities. The world is apprehensive that he will be an ideologue, that he will be difficult to deal with, and that he will try to undermine the peace process. Now he faces a real test and will be trying to pass the first test, especially in implementing what was agreed on so far in terms of the transitional phase of the peace process.

[Tarabayh] As a Palestinian woman, can you describe your feelings when Mrs. Rabin announced that she would pack up and leave Israel after Likud's triumph?

['Ashrawi] There is the human element and I feel with her because she lost her husband who offered his life in the cause of the peace process as he viewed it and because he made difficult decisions. However, in my opinion, this nihilist, this defeatist attitude is not right. Despite its importance, the emotional dimension cannot lead to a real change, or right any wrong.

Palestinian Affairs: German PLO Representative 'Cannot Rule Out' Terrorism

AU0106164696 Munich ARD Television Network in German 2046 GMT 31 May 96

[Interview with 'Abdallah Franji, PLO representative in Germany, by Martin Schulze in the ARD studio in Bonn — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Schulze] Good evening, Mr. Franji, it is nice to see you here.

[Franji] Good evening, Mr. Schulze.

[Schulze] Mr. Franji, what do the Israeli elections mean? Did Yitzhaq Rabin die for nothing?

[Franji] We regret that he is dead. If he were still alive, everything would have looked different. Nonetheless, for peace, every price — even death — is too little.

[Schulze] You represent the Palestinian position, including in this peace process. We all know how influential you are. Will Palestine's position toward Israel change now?

[Franji] 'Arafat has invited all his advisers to a meeting tomorrow [1 June], and I think an intensive discussion will be held. Now that we know that Netanyahu will be Israeli prime minister, the Palestinians will wait and see what his position toward us will be. Will he meet us as the leader of Likud, or will he meet us as prime minister of the state of Israel? There is a big difference between these two positions.

[Schulze] If he acts the way he appeared in the election campaign — if we may put it this way — are you anticipating another wave of terror in the Middle East?

[Franji] The Middle East is endangered in any case, and peace in this region is highly in jeopardy. We have experienced this. While we have been living in peace in these three years, we have seen many wars. Nonetheless, I think we must proceed very carefully, and we must adopt a responsible attitude in the next few days. I hope the new Israeli prime minister will speak in the name of all Israelis, not in the name of one small party.

[Schulze] That was very carefully formulated. So you think, don't you, that there is the danger of another wave of terror.

[Franji] I cannot rule out such a danger, which we may have to expect, if we are unable to shape peace in a way that really allows us to live in peace.

[Schulze] You know both regions — the Middle East particularly well, and Germany where you have lived for many years. What role should the Germans, the Europeans play? Do you think it would make sense to influence the peace process positively, by trade policy measures or the like? Do you think this would be a good approach?

[Franji] Look, peace does not belong to us alone any more — to the Palestinians and the Israelis. It belongs to Europe, it belongs to the United States, it belongs to all European states, and to all those who are responsible for a good development in all of the Middle East. Everyone has adopted the position in the past three years that we must have peace there. I do not think any country in the world would be ready to jeopardize peace or to make the peace process stagnate. I also think the responsible people in the Likud party know very well that they are not the only ones to decide on peace or non-peace in the region.

[Schulze] What advice would you give the Germans, in particular the federal chancellor? Should he bring his influence to bear, and if so, in what way?

[Franji] I don't think I can give the federal chancellor any advice, but I could perhaps give a recommendation — the recommendation that along with all the European countries and the United States, one should continue to work for peace as in the past, so as to give peace a chance also in the future, to preserve peace.

[Schulze] Thank you very much, Mr. Franji.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Envoy—Peace Signed With Israeli State, Not Likud

NC3105124796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1210 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—Muhammad Subayh, Palestine's envoy to the Arab League and the Palestine National Council secretary general, has stated that the peace issue is vital and important for the Israeli people as well as for the Palestinian one.

Commenting on the success of the right under Binyamin Netanyahu in the Israeli elections, Subayh told MENA that security fears and domestic issues were uppermost in the Israeli voter's mind when he went to the ballot box. He added: We signed a peace agreement with the State of Israel, not with one of the parties.

He noted that the peace process will be delayed for the time being, since the Likud Party must study its files. But he stressed that the alternative to peace will be very difficult.

The Palestinian envoy urged the Arab countries to mobilize their resources so as to protect the peace process. He said the Arab countries that have already established relations with Israel on the basis of peace must reassess their stances and coordinate among themselves to protect the Arab rights, especially in Jerusalem.

He added: The United States must play its role so that the situation in the region will not move toward extremism and instability, and international legitimacy must be implemented.

He noted that political parties change their domestic and international policies after reaching power, something that happened with the Likud under former Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who started the peace process with late President Anwar al-Sadat.

Palestinian Affairs: New Israeli Government Urged To Implement Agreements

JN0106070696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0450 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza; from the "A New Day" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat presided over a meeting of the Council of Ministers and the

PLO Executive Committee at the Presidency in Gaza yesterday. The meeting ended at 0100 today.

During the joint meeting, the Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee called on the new Israeli Government to continue the peace process and to implement what was agreed to and signed with the Government of Israel. It also called for the continuation of the final-stage negotiations in accordance with the agenda, particularly the topics of Jerusalem, settlement activities, borders, and refugees, in order to reach a just and comprehensive peace based on the international resolutions and implementing the principle of land-for-peace principle.

The Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee reaffirmed — in the joint meeting that was also attended by Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' — the PLO's commitment to the peace process and the agreements that were signed with the Government of Israel under international supervision and sponsored by the United States, Russia, the EU, and the international community.

After the meeting, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President 'Arafat, read a final statement, saying:

[Begin Abu-Rudaynah recording] The PLO Executive Committee, which regards the Israeli elections as an internal affair, respects the Israelis' democratic choice. The PLO Executive Committee stresses that the signed agreements were concluded with the Government of Israel, which represents all Israelis.

The Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee called on the new Israeli Government to continue the peace process and to implement what was agreed to, as well as to embark on the final-stage negotiations in accordance with their agenda, particularly the topics of Jerusalem, settlement activities, border, and refugees to reach a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy resolutions and implementing the land-for-peace principle.

In light of the new situation, the Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee called on the international community, particularly the cosponsors of the peace process, the EU, the United Nations, the nonaligned group, and the Islamic and African countries, to intensify efforts to provide momentum to the peace process and to implement the agreements.

The Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee called for strengthening consultations and contacts between the sisterly Arab states to reach a common assessment and unified stand to protect Arab and Palestinian rights. [end recording]

The meeting participants decided to follow up the situation.

The Council of Ministers discussed the current political situation in light of the results of the Israeli elections, which were announced yesterday.

Palestinian Affairs: Opposition Expects 'Hot' Summer After Netanyahu's Victory

NC0106192996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Jibril, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command secretary general, by 'Isam Hasan; place and date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Netanyahu's victory over Peres was a setback for the Yasir 'Arafat group. How do you assess the effects of this setback on the internal position of the Oslo group and what possible reactions could be expected from the other camp, which rejects the settlement?

[Jibril] The results of the recent Israeli elections primarily require 'Arafat to leave the stage, because all his policies and analyses have proven to be failures. We believe that the new Zionist government will not even give him the most basic things promised by Peres. We say that this group can only fall, like Peres, and should leave the stage as Peres will be doing.

As to the Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic forces of jihad, which persisted in saying that jihad is the only way to make this Zionist entity realize its limitations, they must now consider the analyses they have wagered on to be the right ones. What is needed now is to have these forces prepare themselves militarily and politically and mobilize their media quickly, in order to confront the hot stage coming this way. We believe that we will be facing a hot summer in Lebanon, Palestine, and around Palestine. Therefore, these forces must meet, talk to each other, and draw up the plans with which they can confront and defeat Israeli-Zionist arrogance, God willing.

Palestinian Affairs: DFLP, PFLP—'Armed Struggle' Against Israel To Continue

NC0206061196 Paris AFP in English 2129 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, June 1 (AFP) — Two radical Palestinian groups called Saturday [1 June] for the armed struggle against Israel to be stepped up after right-wing leader Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in elections in the Jewish state.

"The Palestinian struggle against the occupation forces and (Israeli) settlers will carry on using whatever means possible, including the armed struggle," 'Ali Badwan, a spokesman for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), told AFP here.

"The election of Netanyahu will not have any effect on our struggle which will take on many forms," Badwan added.

In a separate statement, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), called on the "the Palestinian people and all the resistance to keep up the struggle against the Zionist enemy."

The PFLP said that after the election of Netanyahu, Israel "will intensify its aggression (against Palestinians) and (increase) its settlements (in the occupied territories) and will maintain its hegemony in the fields of politics, security and economics."

Likud leader Netanyahu rode to victory in Wednesday's elections on a hardline platform pledging to toughen Israel's security and promising no more land concessions to the Palestinians.

The PFLP and DFLP, two of the three main factions making up the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), are hostile to the peace accords agreed between the PLO and Israel.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Statement Calls Peres, Netanyahu 'War Criminals'

NC0206155396 Paris AFP in English
1421 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, June 2 (AFP) - The Palestinian militant group Hamas dismissed on Sunday [2 June] the importance of the right-wing victory in Israel's elections, saying that "war criminals" had simply traded places.

"The problem between Palestinians and Zionists is one of occupation and this involves whichever party that is running the state," the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) said in a statement faxed to news organizations.

The movement, which carried out a spate of deadly suicide bombings in Israel earlier this year, was responding to the election Wednesday of Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of the right-wing Likud party, as Israeli prime minister.

Netanyahu is expected to take a far harder line in future negotiations on a permanent peace settlement with the Palestinians than his defeated rival in the election, Labor leader Shim'on Peres.

Individual Hamas leaders had condemned the Netanyahu election as a "declaration of war" and further proof that "the Israelis are not interested in peace."

But Sunday's statement took an indifferent view of the election results.

"War criminals have traded places in the Jewish state," said the statement from Hamas, which has pledged to avenge the killings of more than 170 people in Lebanon during Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath in April.

"The results clearly reflect the real trends of Zionist society which are based on terrorism and oppression," it said.

"We stress again that resistance will continue as long as the occupation exists," said the statement from Hamas, whose deadly bombings in February and March were seen as a major factor behind the right's victory in Israel.

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah Urges Israeli Peace Forces To Defy Peace 'Enemies'

JN0206201796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1800 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Higher Committee of Fatah Movement in the West Bank reiterated its full support for the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] in the battle of defending the nucleus of the independent Palestinian state. It asserted that it will resist any Israeli attempts to go back on the agreement.

In a statement issued today, Fatah Movement called on the Israeli Government to respect the agreements and adhere to their implementation, which was delayed on the pretext of the Israeli elections. It called for redeploying the occupation troops outside the populated areas in Hebron Governorate, opening the safe corridor, releasing Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons, and lifting the starvation siege against the Palestinian people.

Fatah Movement also called on the Palestinian masses and all the political and national forces, personalities, and establishments to entrench unity and coalescence to face any violations by the forthcoming Israeli Government and to defend and protect the political achievements of the Palestinian people, foremost of which is the PNA — the nucleus of the independent Palestinian state.

Fatah Movement also urged convening an urgent Arab summit to provide all forms of support for the PNA and the Palestinian negotiators against any intransigence by the Israeli Government led by Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu.

It asserted its readiness to cooperate with the forces of the peace camp in Israel to face the extremism of any upcoming Israeli government and to defend a permanent peace and the common interests. Fatah Movement urged these forces not to cave in to the results of elections and to fulfill their role in confronting the enemies of peace.

Palestinian Affairs: Editorial—Israelis Chose 'Policy of Extremism'

TA0206094696 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 1 Jun 96 p 13

[Editorial: "Facing a Crossroad"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The peace process is undoubtedly facing a crucial crossroad following yesterday's official announcement in Israel of Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the elections for the post of prime minister, and after it became clear that the Israeli right wing will be able to form a new government with a large majority in the Knesset.

Naturally, the apprehension prevailing in the Palestinian street and in most Arab capitals as a result of this outcome is justified, especially after it was repeatedly stressed before the Israeli elections that their results would constitute a referendum on the peace process. This, at a time when the Israeli right wing's victory affirms that the majority of Israelis chose the policy of extremism and intransigence and ignored all the achievements of the peace process to date.

In view of the Israeli right wing's political stances rejecting Palestinian rights, and in light of Netanyahu's pledges and promises during his election campaign that he would not proceed with the second stage of negotiations with the Palestinian side and pull out from Hebron — and that he would intensify settlement activity and close down Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem; that he would not withdraw from the Golan Heights, and other such extremist positions — the question now on the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels is this: How is it possible to move forward in the peace process with an Israeli Government that actually rejects peace and relies on a majority in Israel that has clearly announced its support for the right wing?

Evidently, the slogans of "security and peace" raised at the time by Shamir and which did not lead to any progress-are the same slogans being raised by the Israeli right wing today. In light of these slogans, it is logical to expect the peace process to be hindered and a hardline policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians to be pursued.

In view of all this, the Palestinians and the Arabs should now carry out a serious assessment and formulate a unified stance capable of confronting the grave challenges brought about by the Israeli election results and, at the same time, capable of inducing the international community to exert the necessary efforts to save the peace process.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Jordanian Delegation to Water Talks Cancels Visit to Israel

TA0206143296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordan's delegation to the water talks with Israel, which was due in Tiberias tomorrow, has canceled its arrival. Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i reports that Water Commissioner Gid'on Tzur spoke by phone this afternoon with the Jordanian water minister and got the impression that the visit's cancellation was not politically motivated.

Egypt

Egypt: Syrian President al-Asad Arrives on 'Brief' Visit

NC0306090896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0850 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jun (MENA)—Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad arrived in Cairo this morning on a brief visit to Egypt to hold talks with President Husni Mubarak on the latest developments in the region.

President Mubarak, Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received the Syrian president at the airport. President Mubarak then accompanied President al-Asad to the Presidential Office in Heliopolis, where they are scheduled to hold their talks to be followed by an international news conference.

Egypt: Mubarak, Syria's al-Asad Hold Talks in Cairo

NC0306094596 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0920 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jun (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad held a closed meeting at the Presidential office this morning. During the meeting, the two leaders are expected to discuss a number of important topics, chief among them being the developments in the region following the Israeli elections, Arab developments in general, the tripartite summit scheduled to be held in Jordan on Wednesday [5 June], and regional and international issues of mutual interest. The two leaders will also discuss bilateral ties and ways to consolidate them in the various domains.

Following President al-Asad's arrival, President Mubarak accompanied him from Cairo Airport to the Presidential office, where he was received by the ministers of information, petroleum, industry, and People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs.

The Syrian president is accompanied by a high-level delegation that includes Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Information Minister Muhammad Salman, and Dr. 'Isa Darwish, Syrian ambassador in Cairo.

Egypt: Mubarak Comments on Netanyahu's Victory in Israeli Election

NC3105173896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1654 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a telephone call tonight from Likud Party leader Binyamin Netanyahu following the latter's victory in the Israeli elections.

A high-level responsible source said that the talk between President Mubarak and Netanyahu dealt with the future of the peace process on the various Arab tracks.

It said that Netanyahu underlined his commitment to promoting the peace process and his desire to meet President Mubarak during the coming weeks after completing the formation of the new government so they can have an opportunity to exchange views on the future of peace in the region and he can explain his actual views, which were wrongly interpreted from his statements during the elections campaign.

The responsible source added that President Mubarak welcomed Netanyahu's visit to Egypt to discuss a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East within the framework of a clear concept.

On the other hand, President Mubarak commented tonight to MENA's chairman on Netanyahu's victory. He said that the results of the Israeli elections reflected the Israeli people's will and that Egypt is eager to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. It welcomes Netanyahu's desire to give impetus to and boost the peace process.

President Mubarak added that it is only right to give the new Israeli Government an opportunity to explain its views and intentions on peace without haste.

Egypt: Musa—Netanyahu Needs Time To Map Out Policy

NC3105192096 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1825 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has asserted that the peace process is very serious and concerns the future of the region and the interests of its peoples and countries, including Israel.

Commenting on the victory of Binyamin Netanyahu in the Israeli elections, Musa said this evening that the continuation of the peace process is a priority. There is a need to adopt stances confirming the desire to achieve progress on the various tracks, to scrupulously implement all signed agreements, and to carry on positive negotiations on the various tracks of the negotiations.

Musa said it is wise to give the new Israeli prime minister suitable time to map out his policy and stance on the peace process in his capacity as Israel's prime minister for the coming period, regardless of his remarks during the election campaign.

Musa noted that in his phone call to President Mubarak, Netanyahu affirmed his intention to abide by the peace process. Musa voiced hope that the new Israeli Government will find it necessary to deal with the peace process in a way ensuring its promotion on the road to a just and balanced peace based on the principles agreed upon in the Madrid formula and subsequent negotiations and agreements.

Egypt: Mubarak, Husayn, 'Arafat Discuss Israeli Election on Phone

NC0106054396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2150 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a telephone call tonight from King Husayn of Jordan. President Mubarak then telephoned Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. The two calls covered issues relating to the peace process, preparations for the forthcoming tripartite summit [grouping Mubarak, Husayn, and 'Arafat], and the results of the Israeli election.

Egypt: Mubarak Views Israeli Election, Netanyahu's Stance

NC0106090896 Cairo MENA in English 0800 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Cairo, 1 Jun (MENA)—[passage omitted]

President Mubarak last night said in a comment to the chairman of the board of directors of Middle East News Agency MENA on Netanyahu's victory that the results of Israeli elections came to reflect the Israeli people's desire.

He said Egypt is keen to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region, the [Cairo] papers said.

The president also said Egypt welcomes the keenness, demonstrated by Netanyahu to further the peace process.

President Mubarak was also quoted as saying that the new Israeli Government should be given an opportunity to demonstrate its vision and intentions towards the peace process.

Egypt: Musa Speaks on Peace, Arab Unity

NC3105200096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1715 GMT 31 May 96

[Report on interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Ahmad Farraj during Cairo Radio's "Roundtable" program on 31 May; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has affirmed that a just and comprehensive peace must be based on Israel's full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Anything short of this will not be a comprehensive peace and will not be convincing.

In a radio interview on the "Roundtable" program presented by veteran radio broadcaster Ahmad Farraj this evening on Cairo Radio's 62d anniversary, Musa said the ordinary citizen has his own definition of peace. "I personally will not be satisfied unless a Palestinian state is established and unless the issues of Jerusalem, the refugees, the settlements, borders, and waters are resolved. He went on to say that a balanced solution must be found to all these issues. "Therefore, we are talking about a balanced peace and not only a just, comprehensive, and permanent peace." He affirmed that if peace is not balanced, it will not be permanent, comprehensive, and just.

Musa emphasized that the Arabs must adopt a clear stance that stipulates that none of us will accept peace with Israel at the expense of Arab rights. This requires an Arab consensus on their minimal demands.

On the various tracks of the peace process, Musa said there has been progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track. This progress, though not enough, is concrete. He referred to the amendment of the Palestinian National Charter and to the deletion of the clause calling for the destruction of Israel. He also referred to the Israeli Labor Party's dropping of its objection to the establishment of a Palestinian state. All these are positive signs, he said.

Musa added that he expects that the Syrian-Israeli track will be reactivated and the talks will resume soon. Regarding the Lebanese-Israeli track, he said the main stumbling bloc is Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. This occupation is unacceptable and produces negative results. Therefore, Israel must withdraw from southern Lebanon. He explained that the withdrawal is nonnegotiable because it is obligatory and binding on Israel in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425. However, there can be negotiations on the modalities of the withdrawal.

On his vision of the future of the Middle East under peace, Musa said peace must close the book on the Arab-Israeli conflict by restoring Arab lands and rights and achieving security for both Arabs and Israelis. Afterward, there will emphasis on development in the Middle East based on equality and a just peace acceptable to both sides. He added we must study and prepare for this balanced peace. There must be efforts targeted on specific objectives. Hence, the idea of holding the Cairo Economic Conference. He said there must be momentum in the peace process to give us strength and logical reasons to draw up a picture of the future of the Middle East. The Cairo Economic Conference will play a big role in this regard.

He noted that the Cairo Economic Conference will be held in the largest country in the region, namely Egypt, which is embarking on a serious economic reform operation. Egypt is the largest market in the Middle East, representing half the consumer market of the region. He said there is progress in the peace process. There is a huge economic reform operation. There is a desire to open the regional and international markets to each other. There are efforts to connect the economies of the Arab countries. This forms a good framework for the upcoming economic conference.

In reply to a question on the possibility of achieving regional economic cooperation in the absence of a comprehensive peace, a balance of power, Israel's nuclear weapons monopoly, and the concerns about possible Israeli economic hegemony that this creates, Foreign Minister Musa said: As I said before, a lasting and balanced peace cannot tolerate hegemony, attempts at gaining control, arms races, entering into alliances or axes, programs of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. He stressed that all these are inconsistent with the word peace.

'Amr Musa stressed that the positions of Egypt and the Arabs on the Israeli nuclear program has been and remain clear. He said: The existence of this program will inevitably lead to a race to possess weapons of mass destruction. It is neither fair nor a sound policy for us to remain silent over the nuclear program of a particular country while opposing the programs of another one.

He added: When we talk about a comprehensive peace, we are talking about a real peace that does not give a military, nuclear, or strategic advance to any one country while leaving others as mere subordinates or submissive parties. He stressed that this is an unacceptable thing; this is a clear and decisive stand in Egypt's policy.

On the recent Turkish-Israeli military agreement and the fears that it has caused, 'Amr Musa said: We contacted Turkish officials and I visited Turkey, where I met the president, the prime minister, and the foreign and defense ministers. We talked very frankly about the situation in the region. They gave assurances that this agreement is not what is called a strategic alliance. This does not mean that we should close our eyes or be over confident. This is not an accusation of Turkey, because it has confirmed this at the highest level.

The foreign minister went on to say: We respect the assurances we are receiving from Turkey. We do not want to disturb our ties or spoil Egyptian-Turkish or Arab-Turkish relations because of a third country. He underlined the importance of establishing positive Arab and Egyptian relations with Turkey. Explaining Egypt's rejection of the policy of alliances and axes, Musa said: We are all working to achieve a security that benefits everyone—Arabs, Israelis, Turkey, Iran, and others—within the framework of international law and respect for the principle of noninterference in anyone else's internal affairs.

On the possibility of holding an Arab summit, 'Amr Musa said that Arab summits are always needed, but the question is not having the leaders meet just for the sake of meeting or photo opportunities. There must be understanding on the fundamental issues so that the meeting will be positive and have the desired results.

After noting that there are some negative factors in Arab relations, Musa said: The current Arab situation is not healthy and could not constitute a strong stand in an age of political flexibility and unprecedented economic, scientific, and technological developments. He added: This Arab situation cannot be regarded as a launching point for protecting the political, economic, or security interests of the Arabs. He stressed the need to achieve a minimum level of Arab understanding and reach agreed objectives.

Egypt: Foreign Minister Musa Phones 'Arafat, Israel's Peres

NC3105192296 Cairo MENA in English 1900 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, May 31 (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this evening phoned Palestinian Leader Yasir 'Arafat and the two reviewed the latest developments in the situation in the region. Musa made another call to outgoing Israeli Premier Shim'on Peres, voicing appreciation and best wishes to him after the end of his tenure as Israel's Prime Minister.

Egypt: Musa Meets With PLO's Qaddumi

NC0106195196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Jun (MENA)— Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this afternoon discussed developments related to the peace process, in light of the outcome of the Israeli elections, with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO political department.

Qaddumi later stated that his talks with Minister Musa are part of Palestinian-Egyptian contacts to coordinate positions at a stage that involves change in Israel, after Benjamin Netanyahu's victory as a prime minister in the recent elections.

He said that their discussion revolved around expectations concerning the future of the peace process, in light of official Israeli statements and some extremist views expressed by new political leaders in Israel.

He added that the talks also dealt with efforts to clear the Arab air and ultimately hold a summit meeting. Describing current conditions in the region as "serious," he underlined the need for restored solidarity on a clear-cut base.

Qaddumi praised the efforts being made by President Husni Mubarak to clear the air and hold a summit meeting.

Replying to a question on the tripartite summit slated for 'Aqabah, what it can do, and whether other leaders will join it, Qaddumi said: The summit is being held in the context of efforts to clear the Arab air.

Asked about the impact the Likud government will have on the peace process, Qaddumi said: It is Netanyahu, and not the Likud or the labor Party, who succeeded. Extremist parties succeeded as well and won more seats in the Knesset. The Israelis had to choose between Peres and Netanyahu and they chose the latter.

Asked whether the region will see a cycle of violence and extremism that might freeze the peace process, Qaddumi said: This will depend on the position the Likud will assume after it takes over. We have to wait until we hear of the political line the Likud will pursue.

Qaddumi pointed out that the election results showed that the Israeli mentality has not changed and that over half of the Israeli community is still apprehensive.

Egypt: Cabinet Reviews Israeli Election, Approves Press Law

NC0206165996 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a meeting under Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri today, the Council of Ministers discussed the results of the talks President Husni Mubarak and brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, held recently in Cairo. The Council also reviewed joint ventures between Egypt and Libya, and the necessary steps to implement them. This was stated by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif.

The information minister stated that the Council of Ministers also discussed a report presented by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on the results of the Israeli elections, the future of the Middle East peace process, and ways to deal with both positive and negative aspects related to the entire peace process. The Council of Ministers stressed the importance of Arabs making regional and international effort to consolidate the march toward a just and comprehensive peace, to adhere to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and to implement the principle of land for peace and the UN and Security Council resolutions on the achievement of peace and stability in the region. It also called for giving the new Israeli government a chance to announce its correct views regarding the future of the peaceful activity, away from election statements and hasty decisions.

The information minister said the Council of Ministers approved the press organization draft law as received by the Consultative Council. He said the 83-article draft will be forwarded to President Husni Mubarak and then to the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council. The information minister said discussions on the draft law at the Council of Ministers stressed concern about press freedom and the need to promote dialogue between opposing views, guarantee freedom of expression, and create balance between press freedom and citizens' rights.

Al-Sharif added: In the debate, the ministers also emphasized that press freedom under Mubarak's era is a salient mark of democracy. The draft law reflects the general philosophy of safeguarding press freedom and allowing the Egyptian press to enter the new century, while immune from whatever may hinder its progress and credibility. The performance of the Egyptian press will be governed by national interests.

The information minister said the Council of Ministers also agreed to open new prospects for the private sector to invest in building roads and power plants. Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al- Janzuri said the objective of this step is to upgrade services, reduce the state budget burden, and move toward a free economy. He said movement toward a free economy does not conflict with the state's role in offering public services for citizens throughout Egypt. Dr. al-Janzuri also stressed the need for all sectors of the state to respect the law and the mechanisms of a free economy, so that the law of supply and demand can serve both producers and consumers away from exploitation.

[In a related Cairo-datelined report at 1450 GMT on 2 June, Cairo MENA in Arabic adds: "Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said the press draft law consists of 15 chapters, the first on press freedom and journalists' rights and duties. Article 3 of the draft says the press shall convey its message freely and independently. It seeks to create a free climate for the society's development and progress through enlightened awareness and by helping to find better solutions to serve the interests of the citizens and the homeland.

["Article 4 bans censorship on newspapers. Article 5 bans confiscating, suspending, or revoking the licenses of newspapers.

["Safwat al-Sharif pointed out that the second chapter of the draft law discusses journalists' rights. Article 6 states that journalists are independent and that while performing their activities they come under no authority other than that of the law.

["Article 7 states that the opinions of a journalist or the correct information he publishes shall not be a reason for harming his security, and that journalists shall not be forced to reveal their sources. Article 8 stresses the journalist's right to obtain information, statistics, and news from their sources, whether governmental or private, and it gives the journalist a right to publish the information he obtains."

[The MENA report adds: "Minister al-Sharif said the third chapter of the draft law discusses journalists' duties. Article 18 states that when they publish material, journalists shall be committed to the principles and values of the Constitution and law, and shall always adhere to the dictates of honor, honesty, and the profession's manners and traditions with a view to preserving the values of the society and not violating the rights and freedoms of citizens. Article 19 states that journalists shall fully abide by the press code of honor, and shall be subjected to disciplinary measures if they violate their duties."]

Egypt: Commentary Stresses Peace Process Will Not Stop

NC0106132496 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "The Train of Peace Will Not Stop After the Israeli Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is wrong to think that Egypt's foreign policy can be affected by the Israeli or any other election. A basic principle in Egyptian policy is not interfering in other people's affairs and respecting people's choice of rulers. Egypt deals with states and governments, not with specific individuals.

This has been stated repeatedly by President Husni Mubarak. The last time was during his telephone contact yesterday with new Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the rightist Likud bloc. Netanyahu reiterated that his government is eager to continue the Arab-Israeli peace process. This is an encouraging beginning, which we hope will be implemented in the next few weeks, away from the one-upmanship and the resonant slogans that were repeated during the electoral battle between the Labor Party and the Likud bloc.

Regardless of political observers' analyses of the Israeli election and the division it created within the Israeli community, particularly with regard to the peace process, and until the new Likud government is formed, we should emphasize some facts.

First, the Arab-Israeli peace process, which began under Washington's and Moscow's sponsorship in Madrid in 1991, and the limited success it achieved on the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks, has become a fact that forces itself on everyone. Any attempt to obstruct, abort, or relinquish this process, whatever the reasons, is doomed to fail. What we need is a sincere desire to eliminate doubt and build confidence between the Arabs and Israel.

Second, any delay by Israel in completing the implementation of the agreements reached with the Palestinian National Authority will take the region back years and raise many problems, which regional people, primarily the Israelis, can live without.

Third, the Israeli Government should realize that all the agreements reached between the Palestinian Authority and Israel are not bilateral or temporary agreements; they are binding agreements supported by international guarantees. Any attempt to evade or change these agreements would be a violation of international legitimacy.

Fourth, the Palestinian-Israeli track is the key to a just and comprehensive peace in the Arab region. Unless the final stage of this peace succeeds, no progress can be achieved on the other tracks, particularly the Syrian-Israeli track, which is vital to security and stability in the Middle East.

Fifth, any attempt at pressure on the new Israeli Government by extremists and hardliners trying to obstruct the peace process will have serious adverse effects on the other side, since every action has an opposite and equal reaction. The road would be open to acts of violence by the powers rejecting peace on both the Arab and Israeli sides. Any attempt to force a fait accompli, show muscle, or threaten to use force will fail. The Grapes of Wrath, the massacres in south Lebanon, and the siege and starvation of the Palestinians are still fresh in people's minds.

Sixth, the train of peace will not stop after the Israeli elections. But the peace we mean is a just and comprehensive peace based on the land-for-peace principle. This is the only guarantee for providing security and stability to the Israeli people before all others.

It remains to be said that the Arab nation is actually approaching a historic phase for which it should prepare to force the peace challenge on Israel using its own power and the support of all peaceloving powers. This will depend, above all, on constant inter-Arab consultation and coordination to develop a united position capable of facing challenges and dealing with international and regional changes, and on supporting the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese negotiators.

This is what Egypt has already set out to do, motivated by its historic responsibility toward its Arab nation and by its role as a basic partner in the peace process.

Egypt: Envoy to Israel Views Peace After Likud Win

NC0106082896 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni, in Tel Aviv, by 'Adil 'Abd-al-Tawwab, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-Tawwab] Ambassador Basyuni, how do you see the peace process after Binyamin Netanyahu's win?

[Basyuni] The Israeli people have chosen a prime minister and they are free to do so. A situation exists and it must be dealt with and given a chance. What is important for Egypt is the continuation of the peace process, be it on the Palestinian track— the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict—or on other tracks, that is, the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

An appeal for peace is not enough. More important is what will actually happen on the ground. There must be steps and talks necessarily leading to a genuine peace based on the principle of land for peace. This is our concept of the peace process and talks.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Ambassador Basyuni, what is the impact of this win, Netanyahu's win in the elections, on the Israeli public?

[Basyuni] The public is divided because the result was very close. Netanyahu won by 0.9 percent, a small percentage that shows the Israeli people are divided into two equal parts. As I said, let us watch the situation.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Ambassador Basyuni, in light of the Israel election results, what are the prospects for the formation of the next government in Israel? Will it be a coalition government?

[Basyuni] I do not think the Likud Party will begin contacts with the Labor Party to form a national unity government. The Likud, which has no more than 32 Knesset members, cannot form a government and it must form a coalition with other parties. [passage omitted]

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Turning to Likud's intentions on the regional peace process, Netanyahu, in a phone call to President Husni Mubarak, emphasized his commitment to the peace process and stated his desire to meet the president. Is this a new Likud trend on the peace process?

[Basyuni] The elected Israeli prime minister called the president as soon the election result was announced. His first phone call was with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak; this shows the president's key and pivotal role in the peace process.

Let us not forget that it was the Likud that signed peace with Egypt. Everyone thought Menachem Begin would lead the State of Israel into war but Begin withdrew from Sinai and dismantled all the settlements there. Let us wait; there is a difference between election propaganda and programs and fact. A fact exists and, as I mentioned, we must deal with it as they do. A fact exists. The peace process has begun and cannot be stopped or turned back.

Everyone is discussing peace and opportunities for it. We will give the new government a chance and wait and see. We hope to reach peace with this government.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Ambassador Basyuni, in light of the new facts resulting from the Israeli elections, can Netanyahu give precedence to the demand for security over peace?

[Basyuni] Generally, when we speak abut peace we talk about a triangle with three sides: land, peace, and security. This triangle is a whole. When we talk about land there must be peace, a peace accord, and normalization of ties, plus security arrangements achieving security demands for all the parties. If this equation, the triangle, is completed then peace can be achieved.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Ambassador Basyuni, if Likud began the signing of peace deals in the region, judging from past experience can we expect bold measures by Netanyahu to advance the peace process in the region?

[Basyuni] This is the opportunity I spoke of. I suggested giving him a chance, waiting, and seeing. Let us provide the opportunity and see what he will offer, what he can offer. This is especially true, because peace concerns not only the Arab side, but the Israeli nation, the international community, the United States, and European countries. The entire world seeks peace and stability. So no one can swim against the current.

Egypt: Parliamentarian Expects 'Difficulties' in Peace Talks

NC0106193696 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1820 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Jun (MENA)—Dr. Mufid Shihab, chairman of the Consultative Council's Arab and Foreign Relations Committee and President of Cairo University, has expressed his belief that the next stage of the Arab-Israeli negotiations will be more difficult than the ones held under the Labor Party's government.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Dr. Shihab said that the Likud Party will adopt a more hardline policy and this means new difficulties in the peace process, in addition up to the difficulties that already exist. He added that the new developments will make the start of settlement on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks more difficult, noting that the situation could have been different had the Labor Party won the elections.

Dr. Shihab said he expects the peace process to continue and the Likud Party to show a measure of flexibility by voicing its desire to continue the Israeli-Arab negotiations on all tracks, specially in light of its attempts to represent the views of all parties in its new government, so that it will not be viewed as only a hardline rightwing policy. He added that Likud will be keen to declare its commitment to the peaceful settlement, because governments commit themselves as institutions and states.

He underlined the need for Arab action through more coordination and determination [illegible] make countries that are influential in the peace process, particularly the United States, Russia, and the European Union, play a role in pressuring Israel, take a stronger stand on the side of the Arab party, be more eager to prevent procrastination, and to remove any obstacles.

Egypt: New Israeli Government Urged To Respect Peace Agreements

NC0106060696 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2200 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 31 May (MENA)—AL-AHRAM has advised the new Israeli Government not to disavow the agreements concluded by Shim'on Peres' government, adding that shirking these obligations would mean choosing the path of armed conflict again.

In its commentary to be published tomorrow the paper warns that disavowing the Israeli agreements with the Arabs would put the region at the threshold of a new era of violence auguring adverse repercussions. The paper adds that the State's supreme interests, primarily the desire to maintain peace, must take precedence over and rise above any partisan or ruling considerations. The paper notes that if the new government wants to last it must consider this and show flexibility rather than rigidity.

AL-AHRAM points out that Israel has signed international documents and pledges, including the peace agreement with Egypt, the Madrid conference, the agreement to implement the final-stage negotiations with the Palestinians, and the Jordanian-Israeli agreement. These agreements constitute obligations that are hard for any Israeli government to ignore, no matter how different its ideas about peace may be.

Egypt: Writers Urge Arab Solidarity After Israeli Election

NC0106071096 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0600 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 1 Jun (MENA)—The headlines and front pages of today's Cairo papers center on the urgent and extensive contacts that President Husni Mubarak has initiated to boost the peace process in the region after Benjamin Netanyahu was elected Israeli prime minister. The papers highlight the summit expected to be held in the next few days among President Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, news of which was announced by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa upon his return from a brief visit to Syria, where he met the Syrian president. The papers also highlight President Mubarak's telephone conversations with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, and King Husayn of Jordan, as well as the call he received from Benjamin Netanyahu following his victory. In his call Netanyahu voiced his commitment to promote the peace process and expressed a desire to meet President Husni Mubarak in the next few weeks. Mubarak welcomed Netanyahu's visit. [passage omitted]

In his daily column in AL-AHRAM, Salamah Ahmad Salamah says he believes Netanyahu's visit requires the Arab parties to call for a new Madrid conference before taking any further steps on the road of concessions to a new Israeli regime that speaks of its hostility to peace and that will not hesitate to rekindle the flames of terrorism and extremism in the region.

AL-JUMHURIYAH Board Chairman Samir Rajab, in his daily column, writes: Let Netanyahu fight peace as he wishes. All his spears will automatically bounce back to his chest, the same as they did to Peres after committing the crime of the Grapes of Wrath against innocent children, women, and elderly. He received his earthly punishment but the punishment of the after life will be greater.

Under the title "Peace To Be Determined by Arab Stances, Not Israeli Elections," Dr. Lutfi Nasif writes in AL-JUMHURIYAH that our stance as Arabs on Israel will not be determined by a change of parties or prime ministers. The Arab attitude and the Arab right regarding Israel depend on the strength and solidarity of the Arabs to compel the world, including Israel, to respect and recognize Arab rights.

In his weekly column in AKHBAR AL-YAWM, writer Mahmud al-Sa'dani says it is not important who won and who lost the Israeli election. What is important is the stance of the Arabs, because a just and comprehensive peace will be attained only by the Arabs themselves.

Egypt: Papers View Peace Prospects After Israeli Elections

NC0206094796 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0508 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Jun (MENA)—Cairo newspapers today assert that the Middle East peace process will not die and that the clock will not be turned back. They add that a just peace is no longer a mere slogan but rather a strategic option dictated by world events and changes regardless of the nature of the rulers in any of the countries involved in the peace process.

The papers were commenting on the outcome of the Israeli elections in which the Likud Party won under the leadership of Binyamin Netanyahu, who is known for his radical statements on the peace process.

Under the heading "Advancing the Peace Process", AL-AHRAM says: After the announcement of the Israeli elections' outcome and Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu winning the premiership, important contacts were held among the peace process parties. The paper adds that the hub of these contacts was Cairo, which initiated a quick move.

It says that while Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa was conveying President Husni Mubarak's message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Latakia to agree on an Egyptian-Syrian summit to be held within days, the new Israeli prime minister was contacting President Mubarak to assert his commitment to peace and eagerness to meet with him to explain his true view away from electoral propaganda.

The paper adds that this took place while Cairo made contacts with Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, in addition to preparing for a tripartite Egyptian- Jordanian-Palestinian summit, expected in al-'Aqabah late this week.

The paper notes that Cairo represents a common denominator linking the parties to the peace process for continuous consultations to set a time to maintain the pace of the peace process on various tracks.

Under the headline "Peace Will Not Die", AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper says the Middle East peace process has to continue until the file of Arab-Israeli conflict is closed by restoring occupied Arab territories, fully applying the principle of land for peace, and achieving security for everyone—Arabs and Israelis.

The paper notes the assertion by world leaders who contacted the elected Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, of the need to cling to the achieved peace measures and to back the process in the coming phase. The aim, it adds, is completion of negotiations on the final status of the occupied Palestinian territories and Jerusalem, resumption of peace talks with Syria and Lebanon, and withdrawal from the Golan and south Lebanon.

It says peace advocates worldwide are hoping to hear good news soon because the Middle East peace process has covered numerous steps on various tracks and it is now impossible for the forces hostile to peace to stand against the overwhelming tide of peace. Nations, international legitimacy, and the facts of history are behind this peace, it adds.

In its editorial, AL-AKHBAR says the only way to answer the Israelis who voted for Netanyahu and the right wing, "indicating that they prefer land over security", will be through increased immediate and effective inter-Arab cooperation and coordination on peace until we prove to them that peace alone can provide security.

The paper adds: We, the Arabs, have to be more prepared and equipped for peace which we have chosen as a constant strategy to achieve the interests of all sides.

The paper predicts a future phase of suffering and pain for all advocates of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East. It notes in this respect that the Likud Bloc's political program, on the basis of which Netanyahu has won, contains intransigent stands against the Middle East peace process, such as rejecting negotiations on Jerusalem and refusing to return the occupied Golan to Syria.

Egypt: Paper Comments on Peace Process Under Likud Government

NC0306062296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0512 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jun (MENA)—AL-AHRAM newspaper has called for the resumption of efforts to settle remaining outstanding issues between Israel and the Arab countries based on the principle of land for peace.

In its editorial today, the paper welcomes statements by people close to Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister elect, about his commitment to all previous agreements.

At the same time, the paper warns of the danger of the new Israeli prime minister hampering the current peace efforts. It says the Middle East peace process represents a regional and international commitment that everyone must be concerned for.

The paper asks whether the world will accept the possibility of Israeli Prime Minister-Elect Binyamin Netanyahu opting to suspend the current peace process in the Middle East and whether there is any way to prompt Netanyahu to change his mind.

AL-AHRAM emphasizes that Middle East peace is an international obligation as much as it is a regional obligation. It notes that international parties such as the United States and the EU are contributing to Middle East peace.

It says these world powers were present at each step toward peace between the Arabs and Israel and they signed the agreements during the peace process.

The paper notes that peace, as an international obligation, reflects the interests of the world parties that contributed to making that peace. Even if there is no chance of again opting for war, this does not mean that suspending the peace process does not threaten stability, because war is not the sole form of violence.

The paper says it is certain that the United States and the EU have numerous means to influence the Israeli policy. It adds that Europe is Israel's largest trade partner and the United States is Israel's largest strategic partner. Therefore, the paper goes on, the new Likud government cannot defy everyone and suspend the peace process, if we assume that it truly wants to.

Libya

Libya: 'Source' Denies Report of Attempt on al-Qadhdahfi's Life

NC0306081796 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source has denied a report published in the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS on Saturday, 1 June, under the headline: The Discovery of An Attempt To Assassinate al-Qadhdhafi in Egypt. The paper claimed that an attempt had been made to assassinate Brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution; during his recent visit to Egypt and that a number of gunmen were arrested in an ambush. The source described the report as groundless and absolutely untrue.

Bahrain

Bahrain: Iran Accused of Planning To Overthrow Government; Envoy Recalled

NC0306112296 Paris AFP in English
1121 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, June 3 (AFP) — Bahrain on Monday [3 June] accused Iran of trying to overthrow its government and announced the recall of its ambassador from Tehran.

Information Minister Muhammad al-Mutawwa' told a press conference that a group called Hizballah Bahrain was planning to overthrow the government by force and establish "pro-Iran rule."

Bahrain: Interior Ministry on Arrest of 'Hizballah of Bahrain' Group

JN0306123896 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1120 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 3 Jun (WAKH) — The Interior Ministry of the State of Bahrain issued a statement today on the security situation and the parties involved in it. The following is the text of the statement:

Within the framework of the security measures and arrangements adopted by the Interior Ministry to decisively confront the scheme of sabotage and terrorism that is encouraged by outside parties, and which has, since the end of 1994, aimed at terrorizing citizens and residents, and destabilizing Bahrain's security and stability; and, as a result of the incessant efforts to stalk these elements and expose their foreign contacts and connections, the Public Security organs in the Interior Ministry have succeeded in arresting a terrorist group of the founders, leaders, and members of the so-called military wing of Hizballah of Bahrain. The confessions of several members of this grouping, particularly those in charge of the security intelligence committee in the military council of the grouping, and those in charge of the financial committee in the said council, were taken down in front of the examining judge.

The confessions recorded in front of the examining judge show that the principal defendants, in cooperation with others, established this terrorist grouping at the instructions of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps [IRGC] intelligence service and with its financing in the Iranian city of Qom in 1993 to recruit 3,000 persons and have them undergo military training abroad to overthrow the regime in Bahrain by force and establish a pro-Iranian regime.

The confessions revealed that the Iranian authorities supported and assisted what has been called the military wing of Hizballah of Bahrain, financed all its activities and its establishment in Iran, furnished its main headquarters in Qom, supplied it with the necessary equipment, and had Bahraini youths undergo military training which started in a camp belonging to the Iranian IRGC camps and continued in military camps belonging to Hizballah in Lebanon.

The Public Security organs continue their interrogation of the leaders of the political and military wings of this grouping and with elements who were trained abroad on the use of weapons and explosives before bringing them to trial.

The Interior Ministry affirms that the security bodies continue their efforts to arrest the elements wanted by justice and who have escaped and that these bodies continue to alertly and carefully monitor all suspect activities and movements seeking to undermine security and stability in the country.

Bahrain: Minister Reveals Plan To Install Pro-Iran Government

JN0306120096 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1110 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 3 Jun (WAKH) The Bahraini Council of Ministers held an extraordinary session this morning to examine a memorandum submitted by the minister of interior. The memorandum reveals the existence of a so-called Hizballah of Bahrain. This party planned to topple the regime by force and install a regime loyal to Iran, which threatens security and safety in the country.

Muhammad Ibrahim aL-Mutawwa', minister of cabinet affairs and information, said in a statement at the end of the cabinet session that the council listened to a detailed explanation by the minister of interior of the dimensions of a plan to disrupt security and stability in Bahrain. He explained the measures taken by the Ministry of Interior to address these developments.

Al-Mutawwa' pointed out that the council has taken several measures in this regard. They include the following:

1. Appealing to his highness the amir of Bahrain to call the Consultative Council into extraordinary session to debate this issue.

2. Requesting the Ministry of Interior to issue a statement in this regard to acquaint citizens with the details of this matter.

3. Requesting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take the appropriate political and diplomatic measures.

The council has taken numerous measures dictated by the situation. These measures will be implemented immediately.

Bahrain: Envoy To Iran Withdrawn; Level of Diplomatic Ties Reduced

JN0306125196 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1210 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 3 Jun (WAKH)—The Foreign Ministry of the State of Bahrain today summoned the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hand him a memorandum stating that the State of Bahrain has decided to withdraw its ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran and to maintain [diplomatic] ties between the two countries on the level of charge d'affaires. The State of Bahrain's measure of protest was taken against the backdrop of evidence made available to the State of Bahrain that the Islamic Republic of Iran is interfering in its domestic affairs and seeks to undermine its security and stability by instigating, financing, and training elements that carry out acts of sabotage and riot in Bahrain in an attempt to topple the regime. This was disclosed in the confessions which the persons involved in these acts made to the examining judge.

WAKH learned that the State of Bahrain has repeatedly, and on several occasions, protested against the continuation of Iranian interference in Bahrain's domestic affairs and the Iranian media's campaigns of instigation against the security and stability of Bahrain and their encouragement of the elements of riot and sabotage to continue their acts of sabotage. At the same time, it also warned of the negative consequences which this interference by the Islamic Republic of Iran will have on the existing relations between the two countries.

Bahrain: Consultative Council To Hold Extraordinary Session 4 Jun

JN0306125696 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1215 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama (WAKH)—His Highness the Amir of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, issued an amiri decree asking the Consultative Council to convene in an extraordinary session.

The amiri decree says: After taking cognizance of Amiri Decree No. 9 of 1992 on the establishment of a consultative council, particularly Article 14 of this decree, and on the basis of the report discussed by the Council of Ministers in its session today, the Consultative Council shall hold an extraordinary session tomorrow, Tuesday 4 June to discuss the Council of Ministers' statement on the security situation and its developments.

Bahrain: Amir Urges Expansion of Shura Council Membership, Powers

JN0106210096 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1144 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 1 Jun (WAKH)—Amir of Bahrain His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah stated that the time is opportune and appropriate, with God's grace, to develop the Bahraini Shura Council. His highness noted that the council, which shouldered the trust from the beginning is, with God's help, capable of continuing to shoulder it to realize our aspirations.

In a speech at the conclusion of the Shura Council's fourth term this morning, his highness said: The council has successfully carried out the tasks that we assigned it and this success has prompted us to increase the powers of the council and to make one of its prerogatives the discussion of issues that the people care about in terms of their livelihood and the services that are rendered to them. The council will, of its own volition, present to the government all its recommendations and wishes on these matters in addition to any advice the government needs when it issues laws, draws up policies, or carries out projects, the amir said.

The Bahraini amir said: The success of the experiment and its maturity and the appearance of qualified individuals who care for their country's interest, prompt us to increase the membership of the council making it representative of all sectors of the society and maintaining it as a constitutional establishment to produce cadres capable of shouldering the responsibilities and contributing to national work and joint building of the homeland and the state.

The amir said that in the outgoing period, the council's interests included many issues that preoccupy the people, pointing out that it is time the council's interest covered everything that concerns the citizens' present and future.

His highness said that the activities of the Shura Council and its committees will be expanded, and the citizens will be given greater opportunity to know about its activities and achievements and to interact with it. His highness noted that the government, the council, and the media should participate in carrying out this responsibility.

In his speech, the amir expressed pride and happiness with the council's achievements during its previous terms and said that he is looking for a new role for the council with confidence and hope and with special emphasis on achievements and growth in accordance with our firm Bahrani policy of well-planned development. He said that the council members have proved Bahrain's ability to develop institutions that suit its nature and national work in conformity with its traditions and heritage in developing direct links between the state and the citizens and in harmony with our Islamic teachings regarding the origin of shura principles and values.

His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah said that the founding stage of the Shura Council took place after fruitful work, effort, and cooperation between this young national institution and the esteemed government in the interest of the homeland and the citizens.

His highness also said that during its first term and its four consecutive sessions, the Council increased its responsibilities and duties, developed its experience, and enabled the citizens to participate in dialogue and decisionmaking.

His highness thanked the government and its esteemed members under Prime Minister His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah for its fruitful and honest efforts to implement the development program in the country, achieve prosperity in all areas in the interest of our loyal people, and guarantee security and stability for everybody living in dear Bahrain.

His highness also voiced his appreciation for the speaker and members of the Shura Council for cooperating with the government during discussions on projects and draft laws for the benefit of the homeland and the citizens.

Council Speaker Ibarhim Muhammad Hasan Humaydan delivered a speech in which he welcomed the beloved amir, his highness the prime minister, his highness the heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahrain defense force, and those present. He praised the concern the amir showed for the Shura Council until it because an asset for the government and the citizens. [passage omitted]

Oman

Oman: GCC Stand Unchanged if Israel Continues Peace Commitment

JN0106170596 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, stressed that the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states support the Middle East peace process and that their position will be consistent as long as the new Israeli Government is committed to proceeding with the peace process and as long as it completes what was realized by the former Labor government.

His excellency added that the GCC states' support for the Middle East peace process will continue if the new Israeli Government commits itself to the components which served as the basis for the Madrid conference and to what was agreed by Israel, the Palestinians, and other sides, and also if negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and the dialogue with the Palestinians are resumed, and if the closure imposed on the Palestinian people is lifted.

In a statement to the OMANI NEWS AGENCY before departing for Riyadh to attend the meetings of the 59th session of the Ministerial Council and the Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee, he said that these meetings will be held jointly with the foreign ministers and they will discuss some articles of the unified economic agreement, particularly the customs tariff in light of the GCC states joining the World Trade Organization, as well as the negotiations with the world economic groups, particularly the EU.

He added that the meetings will also discuss a number of political issues of interest to the GCC states. His excellency was seen off by His Excellency Marhun Bin-Ahmad al-Marhun, head of the Foreign Ministry's Protocol Department, and his excellency the Saudi ambassador to the Sultanate.

Qatar

Qatar: Government 'Studying' Results of Israeli Elections

LD0106210596 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1934 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh, 1 Jun — Qatari Foreign Affairs Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani said today that his country was studying the results of the recent Israeli elections and that its dealings with the new government would be based on its disposition towards the peace process in the Middle East.

Replying to journalists' questions on the sidelines of the meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council's ministerial council, the Qatari official said "we are studying and assessing this subject in Qatar".

As to whether Binyamin Netanyahu's winning of the Israeli prime ministership would have an effect on the contacts between Qatar and Israel, Shaykh Hamad said "when we see that Netanyahu is inclined for peace, because we deal with states ... and when he changes his view over the peace process, we shall also change our view in the State of Qatar." [sentence as received] [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Papers on Riyadh Executions, Israeli Election Results

LD0106135696 Riyadh SPA in English 1250 GMT 1 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, June 1, SPA — Commenting on the execution of the criminals involved in the explosion accident in Riyadh, the Jeddah-based AL-MADINAH said the execution of the criminals comes in line with the kingdom's inalienable stand as regards the implementation of the Islamic shari'ah rules.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — a model Islamic state in this contemporary time, prefers the divine law over the man-made rules, the daily said.

'The criminal act committed by the four culprits has provided a clear evidence for the adverse impact of the destructive idealogies on the society.'

On the same topic, AL-RIYADH newspaper said the execution of the criminals will give a clear message that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not the suitable place for spreading extremist ideas.

Despite the fact that some Muslim societies have been suffering from the phenomenon of terrorism as the result of confrontation and clashes of the ruling authorities and some groups due to certain political and economic pressures, the kingdom is not suffering from the similar problems, the daily said.

The Saudi Government, which has been implementing the rule of Islam, will never tolerate any kind of crimes, the daily added.

On the other hand, the Riyadh-based AL-JAZIRAH highlighted the security and stability prevailing in the kingdom and said the subversive act perpetuated by the criminals is an alien matter in the Saudi society. In order to confront deviations in the society, firm measures should be taken against the criminals, the paper said.

On the victory attained by Likud Party in the Israeli elections, the Jeddah-based UKAZ newspaper said 'Whatever the case, peace has become an essential matter not only for the Arabs and Israelis but also for the other nations in the world. If the world voiced its determination on realization of peace, then Likud's leader Netanyahu would find himself forced to go on the path of peace, the daily said.

On the other hand, the Jeddah-based AL-BILAD said the kingdom's officials had earlier made it clear that the outcome of the Israeli elections is a domestic Israeli issue. What concerns us is the continuation of the peace process because we believe that peace is the only way for keeping violence and counter-violence away from the region, the daily noted.

Yemen

Yemen: Meeting Minutes for Eritrea Negotiations Signed With France

JN0206047196 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television Network in English 1930 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minutes of meetings between Yemen and France on the technical arrangements for the implementation of the agreement between Yemen and Eritrea were signed at the Ministry of Defense. The minutes were signed by the Minister of Defense Brigadier 'Abd-al-Malik al-Sayyani and General (Jean Lock Bacony), the deputy chief of the French Army Staff.

Iraq: Saddam Chairs Joint Meeting on Implementing Oil Deal

JN0106152496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1415 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Jun (INA)—President Saddam Husayn chaired a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council, the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, and the Council of Ministers.

President Saddam Husayn congratulated our Iraqi people and the Arab masses on the oil nationalization anniversary on 1 June 1972. His excellency asserted that what was achieved in terms of freeing our oil wealth was due to God's help and the Iraqis' awareness of their national and pan-Arab responsibility as well as their faithful patience in the battle of nationalization, their continued creativity on 1 June 1972, the subsequent clear victory on 1 March 1973, and the achievement of comprehensive and continued progress.

The attendees congratulated President Saddam Husayn on this dear occasion which was achieved thanks to his excellency's wise leadership in freeing the oil wealth from the monopolistic companies and the imperialist states on the path of building Iraq as a model for Arabism and for the Arab generations' future under the victory achieved in the glorious Saddam's al-Qadisiyah and the immortal Mother of Battles.

During the meeting, the attendees reviewed the subsequent moves of the UN General Secretariat and the Iraqi concerned circles with regard to implementing the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Iraq and the United Nations on 20 May on oil in exchange for food, medicine, and other basic needs with a view to expediting the measures in this respect.

The joint meeting also discussed the topics on its agenda. Appropriate decisions and recommendations were made in this regard.

Iraq: Al-Anbari Comments on Oil-for-Food Deal, Role of U.S. Firms

JN0106095396 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0710 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Jun (INA)—Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation to the negotiations with the UN General Secretariat, described the memorandum of understanding on exchanging oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs signed between Iraq and the United Nations on 20 May as a turning point in the relationship between the two sides and a first step toward the lifting of the blockade imposed on Iraq.

In an interview published in the newspaper AL-'IRAQ today, al-Anbari said that, through the memorandum of understanding, Iraq and the United Nations enter into constructive and balanced talks based on joint understanding for the first time since 1990. He stressed that the agreement will pave the way for new relations and contacts based on joint understanding, mutual consent, and confidence between Iraq and the United Nations.

He said that the memorandum of understanding consolidates Iraq's role as a partner in the United Nations based on the recognition of all parties' legitimate interests rather than as member who is ordered about and who has unfair resolutions issued against it.

On the relationship between Iraq and the United Nations after the agreement, al-Anbari said: The new agreement has created an adequate basis and an atmosphere of confidence and joint understanding between Iraq and the United Nations and its specialized agencies, as well as with the overwhelming majority of the UN Security Council member states. This will help implement all the clauses of Resolution 687 of 1991 to end the exceptional circumstances that characterized the relationship between the two sides in the past, particularly the blockade.

He stressed that, throughout the talks, the Iraqi delegation worked according to President Saddam Husayn's wise instructions. He said that the Iraqi technical delegation had the honor of meeting with his excellency the president after the first round of the talks.

Al-Anbari added that, although formulating stands and making decisions is usually a long and complicated process, in practice it was a concerted and easy process that helped arrive at a profound and integrated understanding of all the elements of the agreement in a short period of time, despite the time difference between Baghdad and Washington.

On his assessment of UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali's role in concluding the memorandum of understanding, al-Anbari said that, despite his many preoccupations and travels, Butrus-Ghali was extremely eager to follow the developments of the talks between Iraq and the UN General Secretariat. He said Butrus-Ghali's proposals were always positive and aimed at effecting a balanced agreement that would help the two sides implement the points, rather than confront new problems.

On how he expects U.S. companies to deal with Iraq after the memorandum of understanding, al-Anbari said: I believe that they are willing to deal with Iraq. The prevailing trend in the decisionmaking quarters in

Washington is to allow all U.S. and other oil companies to deal with Iraq, in accordance with the provisions of the memorandum of understanding.

Iraq: Al-Anbari Interviewed on Deal With UN

JN0106200196 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1815 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Jun (INA)—'Abd-al-Karim al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation in the dialogue with the UN General Secretariat, has stated that the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two sides constitutes a turning point in relations with the UN Security Council emphasizing the basic principles of Iraq's sovereignty, national unity, and security.

In an interview with Iraqi television tonight, al-Anbari noted that the Iraq-UN ties are now permeated by an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship and a sort of trust that has been augmented by Iraq's eagerness to meet its obligations, attain its legitimate rights, and end the extraordinary conditions that prevailed over the past six years. Al-Anbari added: The Iraq-UN Memorandum of Understanding signed on 20 May is no longer a mere memorandum between the two sides, but a memorandum and a form of international negotiations in which many world countries participated, including the UN Security Council members.

Al-Anbari described the dialogue as difficult and complex, with more than 20 teams from both sides participating in each session, in addition to several other parties working in Baghdad, New York, and other capitals.

He said: It has become obvious to the whole world and to all or most UN Security Council members that Iraq is the side that met its obligations and that is eager to end the extraordinary conditions, allowing it to cooperate with the rest of the sincere parties inside the Security Council and all over the world to realize the legitimate interest of all, and not to make gains at the expense of others or at the expense of the legitimate stand of other states, taking into account the interest of the Iraqi people and country.

Ambassador al-Anbari noted that the UN-Iraq dialogue constitutes a basis for implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 and lays firm foundations for the start of continuous talks even before the six month period has elapsed.

Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari announced that a delegation from the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the UNESCO would arrive in Iraq to follow up the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. The delegation, which comprises 10 to 15 employees specialized in food, medicine, and environment areas, will help overcome difficulties and determine if the amounts of money allocated to food and other humanitarian materials will be sufficient for the Iraqi people or if they should be doubled or increased to 50 or 60 percent upon an assessment of the situation 90 days after the start of the process.

He pointed out that these individuals were from organizations, which had previously demanded the lifting of the economic blockade and considered the blockade a crime.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari asserted that the Iraqi Government would choose importers and conclude contracts with them on the terms for selling or importing foodstuffs, medicine, and other basic needs, which should enter Iraq through the inlets the government would fix.

He also said that contracts to sell Iraqi oil will be concluded with American, European, Eastern, or Western companies through the Iraqi Oil Marketing Corporation in order to guarantee speed, safeguard Iraq's sovereignty, and to enable the Iraqi competent authorities to exercise their fields of specialty without any interference from any international party.

Ambassador al-Anbari said that these materials would be distributed fairly in accordance with the ration card, which will enable every Iraqi citizen or person living in northern or southern Iraq or in any other part of the country to get equal shares.

He pointed out that the Health Ministry would receive and distribute medicine to hospitals and other health centers in cooperation with the World Health Organization, which will determine the needs of the Iraq people. Medicine, he added, would be distributed to people with chronic diseases in accordance with the current method, which will be improved in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding.

He said that priority would be given to the electricity sector in order to supply power to hospitals, factories, and other sectors which cannot carry out their duties without it. He added that other basic materials needed to purify water and repair some sewers and oil installations would also be imported.

Regarding the compensation that will be paid to Turkey for the transit of oil via its territory, al-Anbari pointed out that this will be paid in kind, not in cash, and will be paid in additional quantities of oil apart of the $2 billion quantities.

He said that the value of the Iraqi dinar will go up against other foreign currencies immediately after exporting Iraqi oil to the world market, noting that the value of the Iraqi dinar is currently better than many foreign currencies' exchange rates against the dollar, such as the Russian ruble, the Turkish lira, or the Yugoslav currency.

He pointed out: The pumping of oil will strengthen the dinar. The dinar will also go up when the unjust blockade is lifted. It will restore its previous real value of $3.2 to the dinar. He attributed this to the fact that Iraq's needs of food, medicine, and the other basic needs will be paid in oil, and so further sums of money will be saved.

In his television interview, Dr. al-Anbari reviewed the atmosphere which permeated the dialogue with the UN delegation, saying: What we have reached with the United Nations has crowned Iraq's sincere efforts which continued day and night pursuant to President Saddam Husayn's instructions. This is despite the obstacles faced by the dialogue which lasted four months, during which 51 sessions were held.

He added: The good management and the Iraqi Government's instructions made our work easier, and encouraged us to work constantly and with confidence and without ambiguity or hypocrisy.

The head of the Iraqi delegation explained that some international parties interfered in the dialogue right from the beginning. He added: At the end of the second round which was held in March, we had almost reached an agreement, except on one paragraph related to the mechanism for purchasing humanitarian and civilian supplies. Had the UN secretary general not departed for China and Japan at that time, the agreement would have been finalized.

He added that the open interference began in the third round of dialogue through the U.S. and British attempts to get acquainted with all the discussions taking place despite the agreement of all Security Council member states to give full freedom to the General Secretariat and the Iraqi delegation to reach such a deal.

He said that on 10 March, the Iraqi and General Secretariat delegations were about to sign a memorandum of understanding but the U.S. and British ambassadors asked the secretary general to present them with a copy of the memorandum. Contrary to what had been agreed, they were handed a copy of the memorandum. Two days later, they came up with 22 amendments, including cancellations and additions.

The head of the Iraqi delegation emphasized that these attempts were made to foil the dialogue, and that some circles were hoping the Iraqi side would run out of patience. These circles tried to circumvent the Iraqi interests and to hold Iraq responsible for the failure of the negotiations. However, the instructions given to the Iraqi delegation, in addition to the logical Iraqi position and the sympathy of the majority of Security Council members, including the UN negotiating team, helped to return things to their previous state and to preserve most of the basic points and principles that the Iraqi delegation used to insist on throughout the dialogue.

Iraq: Oil Pipline, Pumping Facilities Tested 30 May

JN3105180796 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1540 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 31 May (INA)—Iraq announced that its oil shipments entered Turkish territory through the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline at 2100 [1700 GMT] yesterday leading to the Turkish port of Seyhan.

Dr. Talal 'Ashur Kan'an, director of the Northern Petroleum Organization told this to INA today.

Kan'an said: The Turkish side informed us yesterday evening that the flow of Iraqi oil whose pumping started yesterday through the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline started to arrive in preparation for the resumption of Iraqi oil exports to world markets in the next few days.

Kan'an said that the organization has taken all measures and completed all the final preparations to resume the export of oil through the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline northward or through the strategic pipeline network southward following extensive work carried out by the organization workers over the past weeks.

Kan'an explained that the organization also tested the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline network facilities and carried out all the necessary maintenance work on the network which has many export options. The organization also completed the first Iraqi-Turkish pipeline and filled the pipelines, carried out the necessary tests on them, bypassed the destroyed border metering station, and completed the inspection of the cathode protection system of the export network and their maintenance to render them operational.

Kan'an said that the safety and fire equipment of the export network, including tanks, pumping stations, and the pipelines network were tested and maintained and that the organization's efforts were completely successful in preparing the production and export facilities which are now ready for export operations.

For his part, Rafid Muhammad Yasin al-Dabbuni, director general of the Southern Petroleum Organization [SPO], told INA that the final preparations have been made, and that all SPO installations have been made ready to export Iraqi oil. The gas separator stations have been readied and operated to provide the required quantities and qualities of crude oil that needs to be exported, not to mention the oil needed to meet the requirements of industrial installations in Iraq.

Al-Dabbuni pointed out that the SPO prepared the oil storage tanks that will pump oil directly to the al-Bakr Port in southern Iraq or to the Turkish Port of Ceyhan northward. The overland and sea pipelines that will transport oil from tanks to export ports have been checked and readied.

The SPO director general pointed out that the al-Bakr Port is ready to receive and load oil tankers that arrive for the purpose of importing oil.

Al-Dabbuni concluded by saying that the al-Bakr Port was repaired in April 1993. Thus, the grievous damage inflicted on it during the treacherous 30-state aggression on Iraq was reversed. This port also underwent preventive maintenance. It is ready to export oil at a capacity of 1.3 million barrels per day. This capacity will be increased to 1.6 million barrels per day within the next few weeks, he noted.

Iraq: Assembly Source Denies Statements on Ties With Jordan

JN0206193296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1510 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Jun (INA)—An authorized source at the National Assembly denied statements attributed in the 25 May 1996 issue of the Jordanian newspaper SHIHAN to National Assembly Speaker Sa'dun Hammadi during a meeting with the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad on 16 May. The newspaper's assertion that the Iraqi Government dealt seriously with Jordanian advice to accept UN Security Council Resolution No. 986 was particularly denied.

The source stressed that it was a courtesy meeting and that it was held in a friendly atmosphere. The meeting focused on brotherly relations between the two countries and the promotion of bilateral ties between the National Assembly and the Jordanian Parliament. The meeting also dealt with participation in Arab and international parliamentary conferences.

He added that a great deal of what was attributed to the National Assembly speaker and the Jordanian ambassador during the meeting was never discussed.

Iraq: Radio—Netanyahu, Peres 'Two Sides of the Same Coin'

JN3105195196 Baghdad Mother of Battles Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 31 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brothers: Terrorist Binyamin Netanyahu will most certainly form a new Zionist cabinet to succeed that of terrorist Shim'on Peres. It is also certain that the next few days and weeks will show how false and unfounded were the worries and fears several foreign and Arab sides expressed based on the premise that Netanyahu and the Likud bloc would destroy the alleged peace process, and that Peres and the Labor Party constitute the so-called peace camp in the Zionist entity.

Let us, first and foremost, recall that it was the Likud bloc which concluded the Camp David accords with al-Sadat, and that it was the Likud bloc which started the capitulatory march of the Madrid conference. Likewise, we must remember that it was the U.S. Republicans who sponsored the Camp David accords and the Madrid conference. Processes are usually started by the Likud only to be completed by the Labor Party or vice versa. The same holds true for the processes and plans of the U.S. Administration. They are started by the Republicans only to be completed by the Democrats or vice versa.

In its 30 May issue, the newspaper AL-AHRAM said that Netanyahu's election win will not stop the negotiations, but could probably delay them due to the Likud's maneuvering mind-set. Meanwhile, Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH affirmed that Peres and Netanyahu are two sides of the same coin, which is true. One of the two sides is all smiles, while the other threatens with doom and gloom. The smiling side hides the poison, and so does the frowning side. In the final analysis, both are two sides of the same coin. They have the same goal. Neither of them can veer away from the aggressive and expansionist Zionist strategy.

We Arabs must institute a collective move to face up to the grand conspiracy looming over all our heads without exception. We must draw up a joint Arab strategy to face up to the challenges. Such a strategy must rehabilitate pan-Arab constants and prevent any violation of taboos by any ruler. This requires, first and foremost, an Arab summit to effect a reconciliation and some soul-searching, and also to reach agreement on common denominators. The Arabs must take joint action toward the embargoes clamped on Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. Is it possible to do so? it is possible if there is good faith, and if the rulers aim to vindicate the higher

Arab interest, which has never been and will never be on a collision course with national interests.

Iraq: Explosions Damage Planes at Tikrit Air Base

NC0206152096 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Iraqi opposition sources, a series of explosions occurred at Tikrit air base last week. The explosions lasted 20 minutes, damaging seven Sukhoi-22 and Mig-23 planes and one helicopter, as well as rockets and other military equipment. The Iraqi chief of staff and other army commanders visited the air base after the explosions.

Iraq: Government Artillery Shells Kurdish Town 30 May

NC3105165396 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the context of its criminal policies against the people of Kurdistan, the dictatorial regime's artillery that is deployed in (Bani Maqan) shelled the outskirts of the liberated city of Chamchamal yesterday. The bombardment lasted all day.

Israel: Netanyahu Vows To Seek Peace, Unity, Security

TA0206184296 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1716 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Address by Binyamin Netanyahu, Likud chairman and prime minister-elect, at the Binyaney Ha'uma International Convention Center in Jerusalem — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Friends, the State of Israel is today embarking on a new path: a path of hope, unity, security, and peace. The first and most important peace that we must achieve is here at home among us. This is our most important task. Over the past few years, the polarization in Israeli society has deepened, large gaps have been created, and tension between various sectors of the public has grown.

Dear friends, I consider my first mission as prime minister to be to mend the rifts, narrow the gaps, lower tensions, and strengthen unity and our people's sense of a common destiny, which is the very basis of our existence.

I would like to tell you all here tonight that peace begins at home. Israeli society is made up of many shades and persuasions. Our unity is not manifested by blurring the distinctions of each respective group. It is demonstrated, and rightly so, in the cultivation of tolerance and mutual respect for different opinions while clearly maintaining the religious status quo. I am talking about a fair partnership between all sectors of the Israeli public while maintaining the delicate balance between the different world views by which we are guided. This is our viewpoint, and we will follow it. These principles are anchored in Israel's heritage which is the foundation for the unity of our people from which we draw the principles of equality and justice for all Israel's citizens, both Jews and non-Jews.

I want to appeal to Israel's non-Jewish citizens. I would like to tell you something: I consider you full and equal partners in every field of endeavor in this country. I appeal to the entire Israeli public — those who voted for me and those who did not. I want to tell you that I intend to be the prime minister of all of you, without exception. The peace we bring will not be exclusively for the supporters of the Likud or the national camp. It will be peace for everyone and security, welfare, and prosperity for everyone. I say this because I believe it to be my duty to be the prime minister of every citizen, Jew and non-Jew, secular and religious, new immigrants and veteran Israelis, residents of the development towns and city dwellers. Over the next four years, we will all work together for a better future. We will work together for the future of our country, people, and state.

Friends, I have said that peace begins at home, but it has to continue outside, too, and we intend to promote the process of dialogue with all our neighbors in order to achieve a stable peace, real peace, peace with security. May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace! [prolonged cheering] May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace! [Psalms 29:11] Here is the secret of this wonderful verse: Strength and security are the very basis of true peace.

Tonight I extend my hand in peace to all the Arab leaders and to our Palestinian neighbors. I am calling on you all: Come and join us. Let us take the path of true peace together; let us take the path of security for all of us, for all the nations of the region. The government we will form in a few days, God willing, will act to strengthen the ties of peace that have already been forged with the Kingdom of Jordan and Egypt and will continue the negotiations with the Palestinians. Furthermore, we will act to promote peace accords and coexistence with additional Arab countries. I am calling on them, too: Join the circle of peace.

I see our friend, the United States of America, as a true partner in this process of genuine peacemaking. Israeli-U.S. relations are strong as a rock, and I am convinced they will remain that way in the next four years. Our relations are not built solely on interests. They are built primarily on the profound sharing of the values of democracy and human dignity.

I am committed to the values of freedom and democracy as I am committed to the eternal values of the Jewish people, and there is no contradiction between the two. I am committed to the rule of law in our country as I am committed to our Jewish identity, and there is no contradiction between the two. On the basis of these values, we intend to introduce changes in the state's economic and social systems. We believe that every Israeli citizen.... [interrupted by booing at correspondents in the hall] Why are you yelling at the media? Did not one of the ministers say that the elections proved incontrovertibly that there is a God in heaven?

We believe that every Israeli deserves truly equal opportunity in order to fully utilize his potential, and — listen well to what I am about to say — we will finally introduce a truly free economy in Israel, one that is not controlled by wheeler-dealers or functionaries, one that does not block every initiative. I am positive that by pursuing our path, we will liberate this nation's genius and creativity and help the Israeli economy and society to burst forward, to soar, to prosper, to flourish. I believe the State of Israel can be one of the world leaders by having one of the most prosperous and advanced economies in the 21st century, on the brink of which we are standing. And I plan to do all these things, not merely to speak of them. To speak, but to act, too.

I want to tell you another thing: I have often heard of a split between the economic and social spheres. I do not believe in it. I believe you cannot separate economy from social issues, because only with a strong economy can we take care of the weak. And we will take care of the weak. We will close the gaps of poverty! We will take care of underprivileged neighborhoods and development towns; we will take care of immigrants, the elderly, the elderly immigrants, the demobilized soldiers. We will take care of them. Yet I would like to tell you what our most important tool for reducing social gaps is: That tool is education. Education!

I visited Tamra with several colleagues a few days ago, and I met a cute little boy there. I drew him close, put my hand on his shoulder, and said: This boy deserves every opportunity my son, Ya'ir, has; there is no difference between them! That is because only by getting the best possible education will he be able to enter the world of tomorrow, to compete in the world of tomorrow, to succeed in the world of tomorrow. I believe in this with all my heart! I will act to implement it as well as I can!

There will not be a first Israel, a second Israel, and a third Israel. There will be only one Israel with equal opportunities for all, whether in Julis [Druze village], Ramat Gan, or Ramat Aviv. Everywhere! Yes, also in Qiryat Arba'. Everywhere, without exception. I would like to say something else. A free economy and social openness, without barriers, bureaucracy, or patronage, are the real keys to attracting millions of immigrants to Israel. And we intend to achieve this because it is the only way to realize the Zionist dream and bring the majority of the Jewish people over here.

Friends, exactly 100 years ago in 1896, a Jewish visionary named Binyamin Ze'ev Herzl sat and wrote down a dream about a Jewish state. We are now realizing that dream, and I would like to tell you that we will bring the dream to fruition. We will be a free people in our own land!

This state was established to bring an ancient people back to its historical land and restore their national and cultural life. Only thanks to our Jewish heritage were we able to keep that aspiration alive in the diaspora. Thanks to our heritage, we came back to our land. Our Jewish heritage, ladies and gentlemen, is not merely a relic of our past. It is the basis for guaranteeing our future! It is also the only basis for the maintenance and strengthening of our ties with the Jewish diaspora throughout the world. Therefore, we will act together in order to cultivate and strengthen this heritage. We will act together to strengthen our links to Eretz Yisra'el. We will act together to keep Jerusalem united under Israeli sovereignty. I am declaring all this tonight in Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the Jewish people, a city that will never again be divided until the end of time!

Friends and citizens of Israel: We will pursue this path together with faith, unity, peace, and security. We will do all this together because this is the first time an Israeli prime minister has received a direct mandate from each and every one of you to usher Israel into a new era.

I know that it will take some time for a part of the public that may be concerned and anxious right now to understand that we mean everything we say here. This is really a turnabout and not a turn downward. It is a ruling and not a rider. This is our intention, this is our faith, and this is our path. I would like to take this opportunity to tell all you thousands of people here tonight and the tens of thousands that worked tirelessly day and night: Thank you all for your efforts and devotion. Above all, thank you for your faith!

A special thanks to the wonderful people seated here on the podium [the elected Likud Knesset members]. There are no better people. There is no better team. This will yet be seen. [crowd chants: "Arik Sharon for defense"]

I reserve my biggest thanks for my wife Sara, who is a full partner to my path. Her wisdom was a tremendous help to me, while her support imbued me with faith and gave me strength.

With your permission, my friends, tonight I would like to thank a man who has done a great deal for the State of Israel. Tonight I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Shim'on Peres. [loud, prolonged booing; Netanyahu lifts his hand to calm the public] Gentlemen, friends, the campaign is behind us. We are now in a new era, an era of the consolidation of forces. It means the consolidation of the entire nation. I wish to tell you something about Mr. Peres. We had our disagreements — even some severe disagreements — but none of us should forget Mr. Peres' important contribution to the State of Israel over 50 years. Mr. Peres, the people of Israel will always be grateful to you. [applause]

I would like to tell you what I said to Mr. Peres in our conversation the day after the elections: We have only one state, only one country. Let us keep it safe; let us achieve security and peace, God willing, as that is the most ardent desire of all of us, of all the Jewish people without exception. May the Lord bless his people with peace! May the Lord give strength to his people!

Israel: Peres Congratulates Netanyahu on Election Results

TA3105152296 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A few minutes ago Shim'on Peres called Binyamin Netanyahu, congratulated him on his victory, and wished him success. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports that Shim'on Peres left the Prime Minister's Office a few minutes ago for his home in Jerusalem.

[At 1450 GMT, Udi Segal adds: "Peres said that he and Labor would continue to struggle for peace. Netanyahu answered that he too will work for peace. Peres said he would transfer power to him in the most orderly manner." Segal adds that he called Peres a short while ago and was told that Peres would react officially to the election results on Sunday [2 June]. Asked about the Hebron issue, "Peres said he does not intend to make any move for an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in the framework of the caretaker government he will head." "Peres said he would make an announcement saying the present Israeli Government is committed to a Hebron redeployment, and as the outgoing prime minister he expects the next, Netanyahu-led, government to abide by this commitment."]

About an hour ago, Binyamin Netanyahu, escorted by his wife, Sara, and his sons, arrived at his parents' house in the Rehavya neighborhood in Jerusalem. Our correspondent Or Heller reports that the prime minister-designate is slated to reach the Western Wall at about 1800 [1500 GMT] this evening. [passage omitted]

Labor Secretary Nisim Zvili says his party should accept the voters' decision, and its test now lies in the uniting of ranks. Zvili said: I call on the entire Labor leadership not to pull knives on each other, but to understand the weight of the responsibility we shoulder in this new situation. Our correspondent Daniyel Shemi reports that Labor's Sarenu Forum will be convened this coming Sunday to prepare for the new situation.

Binyamin Netanyahu and Shim'on Peres are expected to meet, either at the end of the Sabbath or on Sunday, for their first working session for an orderly transfer of power and government ministries.

Israel: Clinton Calls Netanyahu, Extends Invitation

TA3105153396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Clinton called Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu and invited him to visit Washington. You won at a fair fight, Clinton said, adding that he had read Netanyahu's book about terror and found an important message there. He noted that the United States will continue to assist Israel after the latter decides its policy. This was reported by our correspondent Yaron Deqel.

Israel: Clinton Said 'Shocked' by Results; Ross Planning Visit

TA3105183696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Washington correspondent Ya'aqov Ahime'ir video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The U.S. Administration in Washington is coming to terms with the new reality. Dennis Ross, the coordinator of U.S. policy in the Middle East, announced that he intends to visit Jerusalem in order to meet Binyamin Netanyahu and lay the groundwork for cooperation with the new government in Israel. Our correspondent Ya'aqov Ahime'ir reports from Washington.

[Begin recording] [Ahime'ir] President Clinton, who bet on the wrong horse, is described today as being very disappointed, even in shock, due to the results of the elections in Israel. Starting with the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, and at various later opportunities, President Clinton gave his support to Mr. Peres. Robert Dole, Clinton's rival, will be able to point to this gamble by the President. [passage omitted]

Formally, the U.S. Administration promised this evening to cooperate and work together with the Netanyahu government. This, and more. A senior U.S. official told us that the U.S. was already sending a message to Arab governments in the Middle East not to prejudge the actions of the Netanyahu government. We have learned that Dennis Ross, the coordinator of U.S. policy in the Middle East, is prepared to leave for Jerusalem at once in order to meet Mr. Netanyahu. Mr. Ross wants to come.

Nevertheless, Administration officials were careful to emphasize that Mr. Netanyahu has inherited a substantial political legacy in the form of three agreements with the Palestinians, a peace treaty with Jordan, negotiations with Syria and Lebanon, commercial ties in the Arab world, and relations with Tunisia and the Persian Gulf states. Does Mr. Netanyahu intend to ignore all this, U.S. officials asked? The answer in Washington is very clear. The senior levels of the U.S. Administration hope that their relations with the Netanyahu government will be based on trust and cooperation. Above all, to quote a senior U.S. official, Washington expects the prime minister-designate not to make any steps that will take the United States by surprise. In other words, the U.S.

Administration aspires to have the same kind of relations it had with Shim'on Peres. [end recording]

Israel: Netanyahu States Commitment to Peace to Mubarak, Husayn

TA3105163096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Binyamin Netanyahu phoned Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Jordan's King Husayn this evening. President Mubarak congratulated Netanyahu on his victory. The prime minister-designate said he viewed the peace agreement between the two countries as a cornerstone for achieving peace throughout the entire Middle East. Netanyahu promised to continue the peace process along with security. President Mubarak said that in his opinion, efforts should be made to promote the peace process.

King Husayn also congratulated Netanyahu and expressed his conviction that both men would continue working together. Netanyahu emphasized to the king the importance he places on bilateral relations and said he considered the king a good neighbor and close friend.

Israel: Musa Congratulates Netanyahu, Extends Invitation

TA3105173996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa called Binyamin Netanyahu at home and congratulated him on his victory. Netanyahu told Musa that they share a common past of cooperation and that he hopes it will continue.

French President Jacques Chirac this evening sent a telegram to outgoing Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in which he expressed regret that Peres would not be able to lead the peace process he began to its end. At the same time, our correspondent in Paris Eldad Beck reports that Chirac wrote to Peres that he is convinced that Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu would serve Israel's interests in the best possible way. The French president hoped that Netanyahu would be able to create the conditions for peace to which all Middle Eastern nations aspire. Chirac concludes his telegram to Peres with the expression of a great deal of appreciation for the great work that the outgoing prime minister did on behalf of the Israeli people, peace, and Israeli-French friendship.

[In a report on Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 31 May, Arab affairs correspondent Aharon Barne'a reports that at the end of a meeting with Syrian President al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' "Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa announced that Binyamin Netanyahu has been officially invited for his first visit to Egypt as Israel's prime minister."]

Israel: Netanyahu Aide 'Contacts' PA, Asserts Commitment to Peace

TA3105163296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu has launched initial contacts with the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Netanyahu's political adviser, Dr. Dore Gold, telephoned Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] and told him that Netanyahu was committed to the peace process. Gold said that after the new government was established, decisions would be reached on the ways to continue the political contacts with the PA.

Israel: Netanyahu Media Adviser Repeats Commitment to Peace

TA3105165196 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 31 May 96

[Statement by Shay Bazaq, Binyamini Netanyahu's media adviser, in Jerusalem on 31 May — in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; processed from the Hebrew]

[FBIS Translated Text] The only policy that binds Binyamin Netanyahu is a policy that he will announce later. Any other announcement heard over the last few days expresses only the private position of the person who made it.

As announced yesterday, Binyamin Netanyhau is deeply committed to advancing peace between Israel and the rest of its neighbors, including the Palestinians. Binyamin Netanyahu is also committed to strengthening the fabric of peaceful relations which exist between Israel and those countries with which Israel has those relations.

Binyamin Netanyahu also instructed his senior party members to express themselves in the same spirit that he intends to put across to the nation, a spirit of unity, closing of ranks, and reconciliation.

Israel: Netanyahu Aides on Reconsidering Hebron Issue

TA3105175696 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the conclusion of security consultations today, outgoing Prime Minister Shim'on Peres decided not to carry out the redeployment in

Hebron, but rather to leave this to Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisrael in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 31 May reports that "officials at the prime minister's bureau noted, however, that there was a written agreement, as well as a cabinet decision, about the redeployment."]

Netanyahu's confidants told our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen that despite his remarks prior to the elections, saying that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] should not be pulled out of Hebron, Netanyahu will reconsider this matter immediately upon entering his post as prime minister.

Israel: Likud Official—Oslo Agreements Will Not Be Cancelled

LD0206165496 Brussels La Une Radio Network in French 1500 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Middle East, what is going to happen to the peace process? The speech that Binyamin Netanyahu is to make this evening is keenly awaited. In the meantime, Jacqueline Polac has met Zalman Shoval, the head of the Likud's Foreign Affairs Bureau. He stressed that the new government will inherit the Oslo Agreements made with the Palestinians, but that nevertheless leaves it plenty of margin for maneuver:

[Begin Shoval recording] That means that we will not unilaterally cancel these agreements, but it should not be forgotten that the Oslo Agreements, Oslo I and Oslo II are officially intermediate agreements — that means that one could even call them temporary agreements — and it is only now, in other words after the formation of the new government, that talks between ourselves and the Palestinians on the permanent status can begin, and at these talks I imagine that the new Israeli Government might perhaps have different views and opinions in some areas from those of the Labor Government, above all concerning security questions. [end recording]

Israel: Jerusalem Mayor Believes Netanyahu To Close Orient House

TA0106113196 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert told IDF Radio this morning that he believes Binyamin Netanyahu's pledge to close Orient House will be implemented, although Olmert refused to discuss dates on the radio.

[A similar report on Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0800 GMT on 1 June adds: "Olmert recalled Netanyahu's statements to the effect that Israel will honor all its commitments while adapting them to the circumstances and to the other side's conduct."]

Referring to the coalition negotiations, Mr. Olmert said the government composition should reflect the fact that the Likud, the prime minister-designate's party, has won the confidence of over 50 percent of Israelis.

Israel: Shin Bet Warns of Terror Attacks Following Election

TA0206105196 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 2 Jun 96 p 2

[Report by Yosi Levi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shin Bet and intelligence sources assess that in the next few weeks the terror organizations may attempt to increase their activities.

These assessments are based on the high motivation of the terror organizations in the wake of the Israeli elections. It is assessed that these organizations will want to send a message hinting that if the peace process gets stuck in the mud we can expect many grave terror attacks to take place.

"The next month will undoubtedly be difficult. Only a concerted effort will perhaps enable us to prevent attacks — just as several attacks have been foiled recently without any publicity being given so far," a senior security source said.

Meanwhile, over the weekend several easing measures were introduced in the total closure imposed on the territories before the elections.

Israel: Sources See Intifadah if Orient House Closed

TA0306054596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Intelligence sources in the police and the Shin Bet believe that the closure of Orient House in East Jerusalem will cause unrest and may even bring about an intifadah in East Jerusalem.

Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky has obtained a document dealing with the issue, detailing the Palestinians' illegal activities at Orient House.

Israel: Netanyahu Appoints Team To Handle Coalition Contacts

TA0106185896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The negotiations on forming a coalition will start tomorrow. Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu has already formed an expanded negotiating team headed by Likud Director General

Yvet Liberman. Ehud Olmert will be in charge of the negotiations with SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], Ari'el Sharon will handle the talks with United Torah Jewry, and Tzahi Hanegbi will deal with the Third Way. The head of the team for the negotiations with the NRP [National Religious Party] has still not been appointed. Moshe Qatzav and Mikha'el Eytan will handle the contacts on Knesset appointments. The expanded team will meet tomorrow morning before starting negotiations.

Israel: Meridor on Coalition, 'Realistic' Peace Talks

TA0106185096 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Interview with Likud Knesset member Dan Meridor by anchor David Witzthum and party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Witzthum] Good evening to Dan Meridor, Likud Knesset member [MK] and former justice minister, and to our political correspondent Yaron Deqel. MK Meridor, this is a big day for Binyamin Netanyahu, but is it also a great day for the Likud?

[Meridor] I certainly hope so. I know that these elections, which split the public, harmed the political system in general. The small parties grew at the expense of the large ones. This is not a healthy phenomenon, and it must be addressed. The main thing, however, is the Likud's return to power with Netanyahu as prime minister. I think that this is an important day....

[Witzthum, interrupting] Go on: Netanyahu as prime minister and who else?

[Meridor] There is only one prime minister, and he is Bibi Netanyahu. We will all — myself included — learn about the composition of the new government in the coming weeks, not today. The world, which expected things to turn out differently, was slightly taken by shock. Many Israelis also expected a different outcome. The world is coming to terms with this, however. We saw Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin today. I know that Bibi Netanyahu held good talks with President Clinton, King Husayn, and other world leaders. The talks were good. People are becoming accustomed to the new situation. The Likud has been demonized, and people are now afraid of the specter they created. The sun rose this morning and will shine again tomorrow. We will continue to follow our own positive path.

[Deqel] What about tomorrow? How do you see the coalition's composition?

[Meridor] I do not know what the coalition will look like yet. All the possibilities remain open. The contacts are only beginning tomorrow morning. Your correspondent Yaron Deqel will undoubtedly keep you updated on any developments. Eventually, we will put together a government.

[Deqel] Is it important for you that all the religious parties, or at least those whose supporters clearly voted for Netanyahu, join the coalition?

[Meridor] There is a natural alliance with those parties who supported us. They are our natural partners. The desire to attain a national consensus and forge a policy that enjoys broad public backing — unlike the outgoing government, which based itself on the support of 61 MK's — is very important. I also think that the circumstances we are facing, the path we will have to cross, and the need to alternate between firmness and flexibility, as well as the social situation in Israel, definitely call for an attempt to form a broad basis. We will not depend on a narrow base of 61 MK's. It is almost certain that we will seek a basis of at least 66 MK's, on the assumption that the coalition takes the form that you surmised. [passage omitted]

[Witzthum] What about a national unity government?

[Meridor] No possibility has been rejected out of hand. Mr. Deqel just mentioned that in the televised debate with Mr. Peres, Bibi Netanyahu spoke about the possibility of a national unity government. The negotiations start only tomorrow. I noted that the Likud has its natural alliances; however, I assume that, as promised, the Labor Party will be approached. I cannot guess as to the outcome of this. This is a very complicated process which will start tomorrow morning and, I believe, be concluded within a reasonable period of time. It should be recalled that the new political system — although I myself opposed it and although it decimated the two large parties, which is not good — enables Prime Minister-designate Binyamin Netanyahu to negotiate at his leisure. There is no other alternative. He is the prime minister.

[Deqel] Will he make an effort to establish a national unity government?

[Meridor] I cannot give an authoritative reply to that question.

[Deqel] You said that an approach would be made to the Labor Party?

[Meridor] I merely noted that Yaron Deqel mentioned Mr. Netanyahu's appeal to Mr. Peres with regard to this matter during the televised debate.

[Deqel] Do you think that Labor should be approached in this regard?

[Meridor] I have no wish to go into the details of the negotiations, which are just beginning. It would be wrong.

[Deqel] But should the Likud approach Labor?

[Meridor] I propose leaving that decision to Mr. Netanyahu. I expressed my views as to what the basic guidelines should be. Let me stress something I believe is important: After Netanyahu's and the Likud's victory in these elections, a part of the Israeli public and the world was overtaken by fear. This concern should be laid to rest.

[Witzthum] I understand that Mr. Netanyahu has sent reassuring messages to many world leaders.

[Meridor] I think it should be understood that the Likud was not created yesterday. The Likud was in power for 15 years and left its mark on Israel. We are now returning to power. I want to tell the Israeli Arabs, most of whom did not vote for us, that they are Israeli citizens. The State of Israel is their state. We are their government, and we will treat them fairly and equally, just as we always did and will continue to do in the future. It should be stressed that majority rule is but one aspect of democracy, thanks to which we are now establishing a government. Democracy, however, is also human rights and the civil rights of minorities. None of that will change tomorrow morning. I suggest that we take this issue calmly and intelligently. It is true that the political policy will change. That is why we were elected. The changes in the political path will be that the peace process, which we will clearly continue, will be accompanied by stringent security considerations and, I believe, a more realistic outlook in accordance with our path. [passage omitted]

Israel: NRP, SHAS Leaders Call For 'Legislative' Knesset

TA3105174996 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Correspondent Dan Raviv video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zvulun Hammer and Arye Der'i, the leaders of the NRP [National Religious Party] and SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], met today in Bene Beraq in order to coordinate their positions. Our correspondent Dan Raviv reports that the two men are seeking to present a united front in the coalition negotiations. They said they intend to promote reconciliation between the religious parties and the Israeli people. The two men said that they did not rule out the establishment of a broad-based government with the participation of the Labor Party.

[Begin recording] [Hammer] We have no intention of creating some kind of bloc that will reject this or that combination. We seek a general understanding among the people, although we assume that even from the point of view of the Labor Party and the Likud it involves a lot of problems. However, we are not the ones preventing this.

[Raviv] But I would like to know how you intend to prevent the Supreme Court from enacting legislation because you consider it wrong?

[Der'i] We have no conflict of interest with the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is a judicial body, so let it deal with that. The Knesset is a legislative body. The Supreme Court started legislating when the Knesset failed to do so. We will make sure that this Knesset acts as the legislature and the Supreme Court acts as the judiciary body. That is the distribution of power in a proper administration. [end recording]

Israel: NRP Rejects Netanyahu Key for Portfolio Distribution

TA3105181596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NRP [National Religious Party] has firmly rejected Netanyahu's intention to use a key of four Knesset members [MK's] for every government portfolio for all coalition partners other than the Likud, while the Likud itself will receive a portfolio for every three MK's.

Zvulun Hammer told our correspondent Yaron Deqel that he was surprised by the arrogance and alienation the Likud was already demonstrating toward its coalition partners so early on. This is unprecedented, Hammer said, and I find it inconceivable that they should come up with this new invention now.

Israel: Likud Plans for Coalition Negotiations Detailed

TA0206161696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Likud sources say Netanyahu hopes to present his new government to the Knesset on 17 June. The outgoing director general of the Prime Minister's Office, Tzvi Alderoti, met with his slated successor Yvet Liberman to discuss an orderly transition. [Reporting on Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 2 June, political correspondent Udi Segal adds that "Alderoti and Lieberman agreed that the office transfer will take place on 17 June, the first day of the Knesset summer session. Liberman believes the Likud will be able to form a coalition by that date."]

The Likud will begin talks with its potential coalition partners tomorrow morning. This was decided in a meeting of the party's negotiating team today. Representatives of six parties will be invited to discuss joining the Netanyahu government. Initial contacts have already been made, and this morning the head of the Likud negotiating team, Yvet Liberman, met with the leader of Yisra'el Ba'aliya party, Natan Sharansky.

Netanyahu released a statement today on the economic policy he intends to pursue. He also continued to receive international messages of congratulations. David Ze'ev reports:

[Ze'ev] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher phoned Israel's prime minister-elect this morning. Netanyahu's office says he told Secretary Christopher that his government will continue to negotiate with the intention of reaching a real and stable peace. Christopher said that, for its part, the United States was sending what was referred to as calming messages to the Arab world. The American secretary also suggested that Netanyahu pay a visit to Washington after he forms his coalition.

Netanyahu himself sent out today what he hoped would be a calming economic message domestically. A statement this morning said that he is committed to a free market economy. It said Netanyahu views with great importance the establishment of an air of stability which will increase local and foreign investment. The prime minister- elect sees the stock exchange as a central tool for growth and attracting investments. The statement goes on to say that Netanyahu intends to give priority to the privatization of government-owned companies and that he will pursue a responsible economic policy which will ensure stability, lower inflation, and continuing growth in the State of Israel.

But before he does any of that, Netanyahu will have to set up a coalition. The Likud's Moshe Qatzav is optimistic, despite the differing demands which parties are expected to raise in negotiations. [passage omitted]

By law, there can be no more than 18 cabinet ministers. Qatzav says Netanyahu does not intend to try to change that law and that the Likud-Gesher-Tzomet bloc will have a majority of the ministers.

As for religious legislative demands, Qatzav says the status quo is to be maintained. And while there is opposition by at least some to the inclusion of the far-right Moledet Party in the coalition, Qatzav says it has been invited to a meeting tomorrow.

Netanyahu's office says Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent a message of congratulations hoping for the continued development of binational ties for the benefit of peace and stability in the Middle East. He wished Netanyahu success and the people of Israel prosperity. The U.S. Republican Party candidate, Bob Dole, also phoned Netanyahu to congratulate him.

Israel: Peres Said 'Firmly Opposed' to Unity Government

TA0306104096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said he will not initiate the establishment of a national unity government, adding that we should wait and see whether the Likud approaches Labor on this issue. Several ministers told our political correspondent Shlomo Raz, however, that Peres is firmly opposed to Labor joining a national unity government. Peres made his remarks during a meeting of Labor's ministers.

Also in the meeting, Minister Hayim Ramon sharply criticized Minister Ehud Baraq, saying some people are in the habit of shirking responsibility and that Baraq's headquarters made no contribution, failed to pass on the results of polls it had, and only dealt with casting aspersions. Minister Baraq is slated to answer Ramon's accusations when the session continues this evening.

Labor Secretary Nisim Zvili proposed the establishment of a commission of inquiry made up of experts and politicians to examine the relations between the party, the religious public, and the new immigrants, as well as the functioning of the elections headquarters.

Minister Ya'aqov Tzur said that the peace process moved forward too quickly. He believes that Labor is too much identified with Meretz. It has become a party of the rich which behaves with arrogance and condescension toward parts of the public.

Israel: Ramon Criticizes Baraq, Rejects 'Unity' Government

TA3105185096 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Interview with Labor Minister Hayim Ramon by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik on 31 May; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ramon] There is a failure, which hurts mainly on the national level, but also on the personal one. One cannot always succeed apparently. There are failures, and one should learn from them.

[Sukenik] Were you told that an accusing finger would be pointed at you, your party, and your party leadership?

[Ramon] I assume I will be one of the main culprits. I am not surprised. There were those who had planned it and even engaged in it in the course of the election campaign. Still, I do not shirk responsibility. I presume there are also others who were responsible, but they apparently shirk the responsibility that they are supposed to shoulder by virtue of their positions. This is not the way I behave.

[Sukenik] Who are you referring to when you say that there were those who planned to accuse you?

[Ramon] Let everyone make his own assessment.

[Sukenik] What will happen in Labor now, in your opinion?

[Ramon] I am not sure. In the near future I assume we will need to sober up, stand upright, and begin to wage the fight, on the opposition benches, against a policy about which I am very apprehensive. I am afraid of the person who heads the government from the viewpoint of his suitability for the job, and I am afraid of his policy. The combination of unsuitability and incorrect policy may lead to a great catastrophe and result in grave problems for the State of Israel.

[Sukenik] What are the chances for a national unity government under Netanyahu's leadership where you may be a minister?

[Ramon] It seems a very remote possibility to me. I do not consider this real at the moment.

[Sukenik] You know that some in Labor spoke of this yesterday and the day before yesterday.

[Ramon] I have not spoken of this.

[Sukenik] How about the so-well-expected Ehud Baraq-Hayim Ramon war?

[Ramon] I do not intend to fight. I regret the so-called Baraq headquarters. Since I assumed my position in the campaign committee, this headquarters and people around Baraq dealt with attempts of this kind. I did not think there was room for this before, nor is there room for this now. I do not intend to engage in any personal struggles in the near future.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 31 May reports that "Minister Hayim Ramon this evening leveled strong criticism at Minister Ehud Baraq, saying that Baraq also largely shared in the election failure. Referring to Minister Baraq Ramon said: During this election campaign there were people who dealt more with how to beat me than how to win the elections. Referring to a comment by Ehud Baraq to the effect that he has a load of complaints against Minister Hayim Ramon, Ramon said that if anybody had time to engage in such things during such a critical period, it may be fitting to establish an inquiry commission about this."]

[Later in the 1700 GMT Channel 2 program, Gadi Sukenik cites Baraq's confidants as saying that "the important point today is to help strengthen the Labor Party in order to win the next elections, and not to engage in children's games of vain accusations."]

Israel: Shahal—Labor Belongs in Opposition Not Unity Government

TA0106130096 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0700 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Public Security Minister Moshe Shahal by anchor 'Adi Talmor and political correspondent Udi Segal; place not given; on the weekly "In the Current Situation" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Talmor] Moshe Shahal, who is still the public security minister, is on the line. Good morning, sir.

[Shahal] Good morning, 'Adi.

[Talmor] Since you are still in charge, I would like to ask you this: Following a period in which Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] carried out no terrorist attacks in order to facilitate Shim'on Peres' reelection, how are you and your personnel preparing for the possibility that Hamas, Hizballah, and the others will now try to resume attacks inside Israel?

[Shahal] I have instructed the police accordingly and discussed the matter with the Supreme Counterterror Command. I explained my stand that during the caretaker government's period, the security forces must exercise even greater caution in order to prevent attacks. There is a danger that, as a result of the elections, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad will attempt to perpetrate attacks. Another threat is that some individuals may take advantage of the gradual easing of the closure to enter the State of Israel. All of this necessitates greater alertness and even greater care to prevent an attack.

[Segal] Mr. Shahal, with reference to the situation in Labor: We have heard Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq make very serious charges against Hayim Ramon, who chaired the publicity campaign, and have heard counteraccusations from the latter. First of all, do you support the stand taken by the Shohat-Baraq-Ben-Eli'ezer axis that the possibility of a unity government should not be rejected out of hand or are you completely opposed to it?

[Shahal] I am completely opposed to it. The majority of the public voted for a concept that is diametrically opposed to ours, and although I sincerely hope that Bibi Netanyahu will be successful for the sake of the State of Israel, I remain opposed to his party's line, even when it is embellished with assurances that the peace process will continue. There are some basic things that cannot be hidden; the truth cannot be halved. There are two contrasting outlooks, and the people chose one that contradicts ours. I do not think we should sit in the next government. Nowadays, our duty lies in being an alert opposition and one that will try to persuade the government as best it can to commit no errors and will represent half the nation. [passage omitted]

[Talmor] In conclusion, Mr. Shahal: Do you plan to compete for the nomination as Labor's candidate for the premiership elections in four years?

[Shahal] I do not think that is relevant at this point. What we should do immediately is rebuild the party. Our political movement needs an immediate blood transfusion....

[Talmor, interrupting] Who can rebuild the party?

[Shahal] I would think that in the immediate future, Shim'on Peres, with his experience, should be the pivot. That will also prevent the war of succession that began much too soon. I think the Knesset faction should be reorganized and made fit to function. These actions require utmost inner unity, and therefore I totally disagree with all the so-called axes. Right now, we are committed to one single purpose: to unite in order to present a fit, very responsible Knesset opposition. I think the Israeli public that put its trust in us expects us to act as responsibly as possible.

[Talmor] Minister Moshe Shahal, good morning and thank you.

Israel: Israeli Arabs Express Satisfaction With Netanyahu Speech

TA0306081796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Arab sector has expressed satisfaction with Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu's speech in Jerusalem yesterday. Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, chairman of the Israeli Arab Follow-Up Committee, told our correspondent Yo'el Dar that Netanyahu's speech was received with satisfaction by the entire Arab sector. At the same time Nimr Husayn added that now it remains to be seen how Netanyahu acts and whether he will complete the peace process with the Palestinians and give Israeli Arabs full equality of rights.

Israel: Likud Official on Negotiating With Palestinians

LD0206172096 Brussels La Une Radio Network in French 1600 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Middle East: The speech which Binyamin Netanyahu is to make this evening is keenly awaited. Meanwhile, Jacqueline Polac has met Zalman Shoval, head of the Likud's Foreign Affairs Bureau. She asked him if he imagines or if he can see the new Israeli Government negotiating with Yasir 'Arafat:

[Begin recording] [Shoval] You know, he is not exactly our preferred partner, but that is a decision for the Palestinians to make, and Mr. Netanyahu's diplomatic adviser, Dr. Gold, yesterday got in touch with Mr. Abu Mazin, who is the Palestinian Authority's Number Two, and yes, we are going to negotiate with the Palestinian leadership as it stands.

[Polac] The Labor Party no longer rules out the eventual creation of a Palestinian state. What is the Likud's position?

[Shoval] We are opposed to the creation of a Palestinian state, but we are going to offer, and we have offered the Palestinians a very, very broad, very, very extensive administration and almost unlimited autonomy, excluding only matters that concern our security. Apart from that, we do not at all wish to become mixed up in the internal affairs of the Palestinian people in their territories. [end recording]

Israel: Mordekhay Seeks Formula To Curb Israeli Arab Voting Power

TA0206130696 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 2 Jun 96 p 1

[Report by Sha'ul Schiff]

[FBIS Translated Text] Reserve Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, head of the Likud election headquarters and a candidate for a senior portfolio in Binyamin Netanyahu's government, said in a weekend interview that "we must put an end to the one-sided, leftist bias of the media immediately."

Mordekhay added: "The media has not shown itself to be balanced — and this is an understatement. It brazenly and blatantly took a stand while ignoring facts and figures and abused its direct and indirect influence on Israeli public opinion. This is intolerable. It is the exact opposite of democracy."

In an interview with a Kefar Habad organ, Mordekhay said: "We will examine every detail of the Oslo accords that has been implemented in order to minimize the damage. We will not talk to 'Arafat or hold a dialogue with the Palestinian Authority until they fulfill their commitments as signed in the accords."

Referring to the negotiations with Syria, Mordekhay said "peace is vital to Syria; it needs it more than anything else. Consequently, I want to speak to the Syrians in their own language and say: Let's make a peace of the brave, a peace of honor, but a peace that, from our point of view, includes security as well. We will not withdraw from the Golan Heights, period."

Mordekhay believes "a formula should be found that will enable Israeli Arabs to preserve their rights on one hand while, on the other, will prevent a situation wherein their vote decides who will be the prime minister and, thereby, determines the fate of the nation and country."

Israel: Nabulus, Janin Open to Israelis

TA0106112796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabulus and Janin were reopened to Israeli traffic last night. Our correspondent in the territories Uri Gordon reports that the closed military zone orders pertaining to the other West Bank cities which were issued before the elections remain valid.

Israel: Peres—Hebron Redeployment Up to New Government

TA0206083296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister told the cabinet that the implementation of the Hebron redeployment will be handed to the new government. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that in the cabinet meeting, Shim'on Peres stressed that the government remains committed to the implementation of all aspects of the interim agreement, including the H?bron redeployment.

It was agreed with the Palestinian Authority that the redeployment would be carried out by mid-June, but due to the change of government it was decided that it would be dealt with by the new government.

Elsewhere, Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] said that the Palestinians have to reconsider their negotiating strategy with Israel. He also proposed discussing the composition of the team to the talks. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that PLO senior officials have begun intensive contacts with the Arab states, the EU, and the United States and Russia, the sponsors of the peace process. In these contacts, the PLO leaders express concern about the Likud's rise to power and want pressure to be exerted on Israel to continue the implementation of the Oslo accords.

Israel: Workers Allowed Into Jewish Settlements

TA0206152596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been an additional easing of the closure on the territories. From today, Palestinian workers will be permitted to work in the Jewish settlements in Judaea and Samaria and in the Jordan Rift Valley. This was reported by our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

Israel: Chief of Staff Orders Slowdown in Palestinian Talks

TA0306082196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A senior security source says that the chief of staff has ordered the senior army officers involved in the negotiations with the Palestinians to slow down the speed of talks until the new government is established and determines its policy on the issue. The source told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that Israel's security and civilian committees are maintaining only phone links with the Palestinians.

The Palestinians expressed concern about the delay in the work meetings and about delays in the entire process.

Israel: Vote Breakdown Analyzed; Blank Slip 'Mystery' Noted

TA3105181696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Correspondent Bo'az Shapira video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Central Elections Committee today published the official, final results of the elections. There were few changes following the counting of the special votes. At 1700 [1400 GMT], this afternoon, Shim'on Peres' last hopes were dashed. Even those who voted in double envelopes, mostly soldiers, gave Netanyahu a small majority. It was only to be expected. The Labor Party knows that over the past few years, the right wing has enjoyed a small majority among the Jewish public. Only Yitzhaq Rabin managed to change that, just barely, four years ago. This time, Labor Party officials hoped that Rabin's assassination would help but also sought to guarantee the Arab vote. The Arabs indeed increased their vote from 70 to 77 percent, and approximately 89 percent of the Arabs voted Peres. This was not enough, however, because the Jewish voter turnout surprisingly rose to a level not seen since the late 1960's. Thus, the votes Netanyahu received from the Jewish public ultimately outweighed the combined total of Jewish and Arab votes given to Peres.

Another record was set in this week's elections. Almost 5 percent of the vote, approximately 145,000 voters, cast blank slips which were counted as disqualified votes. In the previous election campaigns, the number of disqualified votes was 20,000. The identities of those who cast blank slips remains a mystery. Hardly any ultra-Orthodox voters cast blank slips. They all voted Netanyahu. Among the Arabs, only about 12,000 cast blank slips. It appears that approximately 100,000 Jewish voters throughout the entire country could not, or would not, decide between Peres and Netanyahu. They came to the voting stations not in order to effect change the government but to generate the great confusion of this election campaign. Approximately half of the voters exploited the fact that they could cast separate votes for prime minister and for the Knesset in order to vote for parties with social, rather than political agendas. Whoever thought the direct elections for prime minister would split the Israeli people into two large right-wing and left-wing camps discovered that the new system divided the nation into many more social groups.

[Jerusalem Channel 2 Television in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 31 May reports that "two attorneys, Hayim Kalir and Shalom Savyon appealed to the chairman of the Central Elections Committee today. They are seeking to include the blank slips into the count of valid votes. If this is indeed done, it may turn out that neither Peres nor Netanyahu can be considered as having received more than half of the valid votes as stipulated by the election law."]

Jordan: Israel's Netanyahu Phones King, Discusses Peace Process

JN3105173296 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 31 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In his first foreign contact, the winning Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu held a telephone conversation this afternoon with His Majesty King Husayn. They exchanged views on the peace process and the need to continue it.

His Majesty King Husayn congratulated Netanyahu on winning the confidence of the Israeli voters. He wished him success in serving his people and in reaching a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace which all the peoples of the region will enjoy.

Jordan: Husayn—Netanyahu Can Lead Israel to Peace

TA0206101096 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 2 Jun 96 p 5

[Interview with Jordan's King Husayn by 'Oded Granot held "at Husayn's palace garden in Amman" 1 June]

[FBIS Translated Text] "I was not surprised by the results of the Israeli elections," says King Husayn in a special interview with MA'ARIV, "and there is no reason to consider Netanyahu's victory as a move aimed against peace. The peace process has its own dynamics and is irreversible."

During the interview the king expressed great confidence in the Likud leader's ability to lead Israel to a comprehensive peace. "This was the decision of the Israeli public. One should not evince suspiciousness toward this decision."

[Granot] Are you not concerned about the statements made by Likud officials before the elections?

[Husayn] Everything is a question of timing and of the reality in which we live. In the past we heard all kinds of people making statements, but had we listened to them we would not have achieved what we achieved. We are dealing here with an Israeli nation that on the one hand wants to make sure its leadership strives toward peace, while on the other to have a feeling of security. Netanyahu was given the opportunity and the nation's confidence to achieve for the Israelis both peace and security.

In the past I spoke of the elections with Rabin. Rabin was a true friend, a courageous and honest man. A man of honor. We always shared the understanding that the Israeli-Jordanian peace enjoyed a great majority in the Israeli Knesset — more so than any other issue raised before it in the past. Peace with Israel does not depend on one man. Israel does not have one camp that wants peace and another that does not.

[Granot] What do you think will happen now in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations?

[Husayn] We should wait and see. One thing is clear, however, and that is that the Golan Heights will not be returned without peace being given in return.

[Granot] And what can you tell the Palestinians, who seem very concerned about Netanyahu's victory?

[Husayn] I am sure they are concerned, but they have no reason to be. I suggest not to prejudge by saying this is the end of the peace process. The peace process is alive and will continue.

[Granot] Will Netanyahu participate in the tripartite summit in Jordan this week?

[Husayn] The possibility of inviting Netanyahu was considered, but perhaps it is too early. He still has to establish his government. The summit will be held on 5 June, but we will certainly meet in the near future — whether on a bilateral basis or in a broader forum. Together we will see what we can do to advance the peace process. I congratulated Netanyahu and wished him success in his job. He assured me he is committed to the peace process. I stressed our support and said I would do everything I can to advance peace.

[Granot] An editorial in a Jordanian paper supporting Netanyahu's election said that only one man in Israel can reach a peace agreement. Do you agree with this?

[Husayn] This is an opinion that is certainly worthy of consideration. I believe Rabin was such a man and he certainly managed to achieve something. Now Netanyahu should be given the opportunity, and there is no reason to be suspicious toward him.

[Granot] In the tripartite summit in Cairo last month you made a statement implying you are not opposed to 'Arafat's trying to obtain control over the Islamic holy sites.

[Husayn] I have not changed my opinion and I still believe the holy sites belonging to the three religions should be above any national controversies. I hope both east and west Jerusalem will become a symbol of the peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

[Granot] In light of the statement made by Ari'el Sharon in the past to the effect that Jordan should be the Palestinians' homeland, does Jordan feel any anxiety over the fact that he will have a key position in the Israeli Government?

[Husayn] I hope Sharon has changed his opinion. Beyond this I have no reason or right to intervene in internal Israeli issues.

[Granot] During the Sharm-al-Shaykh conference you and other regional leaders undertook to fight terrorism. Was this conference followed by any action on the ground?

[Husayn] I had the honor of flying to Sharm-al-Shaykh together with President Clinton. I said we should make sure that this conference would not be merely a photo-opportunity. Unfortunately not much has been done since then. Without mentioning any countries in particular, it is important to say that any government harboring terrorists should understand that this is intolerable and unacceptable to all those who believe in peace. A clear and unequivocal message should be sent to these countries.

[Granot] Are you referring to sanctions?

[Husayn] I am referring to any decision that will be taken.

[Granot] Recently there have been reports about Palestinians from the rejectionist front who infiltrated into Jordan from Syria in order to harm Israeli tourists, among other things. Can such a thing be done without the Syrians' knowled'e?

[Husayn] All I can say is that were it not for the alertness of the responsible elements, tragedies could have occurred here. This activity is not stopping. Weapons, explosives — all this is aimed at harming Jordanians and our guests and at turning Jordan into a basis for terror operations. It started immediately after the Israeli-Jordanian peace agreement was endorsed. The aim is to harm peace.

[Granot] What do you think about the Israeli-Turkish cooperation agreement and the possibility of involving Jordan in this agreement?

[Husayn] We did not discuss this, but I think it is time we all cooperated against terrorism. The truth is I was surprised by the angry reaction of various elements to the Israeli-Turkish security agreement. Jordan has had a similar agreement with Turkey for a long time, but perhaps nobody was aware of it. The whole issue was simply blown out of proportion.

[Granot] Will you phone Peres to console him about his defeat?

[Husayn] Peres is an old friend. I will remain in touch with him.

Jordan: Prime Minister 'Confident' Peace Process To Continue

JN3105193796 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 31 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video; from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti said that the peace process in the Middle East will continue despite the results of the Israeli elections. Al-Kabariti's remarks came upon his arrival in Amman at the end of his visit to Algeria and Tunisia.

[Begin al-Kabariti recording] Well, again I do not have the right to comment on the choice of the Israeli people. However, I feel very confident that the peace process will continue, and it will ultimately reach its logical objective, and it might take sometime, there might be some obstacles, there might be some frustrations, but eventually, we will get to the ultimate logical end. [end recording]

Jordan: Information Minister—Peace Process 'Irreversible'

JN3105200596 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 31 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video; from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said that Jordan is confident that the new Israeli Government will pursue pro-peace policies. In a statement to the AP, the minister said the peace process is a strategic option for all countries in the region and is irreversible.

[Begin al-Mu'ashshir recording] I think that peace has become a strategic option for all the countries of the region. We, in Jordan, have signed a peace treaty with the State of Israel, a treaty that has enjoyed wide consensus in Israel itself, and as such, we feel confident that the new Israeli Government will indeed pursue a pro-peace policy that would result in resumption of the negotiations on all the other tracks, Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese, in order to reach a comprehensive peace in the region.

This peace process has become irreversible. There is an international will to push it forward and to see it to its only logical conclusion which is a successful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. And we will continue to work with the Israeli Government to see about the best possible means in order to push this peace process forward and to bring it to its successful conclusion. [end recording]

Jordan: Prime Minister, al-Husayni View Likud's Election Win

JN0206133396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti received Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of the Jerusalem file in the Palestinian National Authority, at the Prime Ministry today. They reviewed Jordanian-Palestinian relations, the peace process in the region, the situation in Jerusalem, and the latest developments following the victory of the Israeli right-wing in the Israeli elections.

Following the meeting, al-Husayni spoke to reporters about the issues he discussed with the prime minister. He said:

[Begin al-Husayni recording] We reviewed the overall situation, particularly in the city of Jerusalem; and the expected Israeli measures. We discussed whether the Israeli Government will take specific steps in accordance with its electoral platform or act in a different way. We also discussed the possible reactions to their actions. No doubt, such a change requires a new tactic and approach and concerted Palestinian and Arab steps. This is what we are seeking. We hope the beginning of this coordination will be in al-'Aqabah [reference to a Jordanian-Palestinian-Egyptian summit scheduled in al-'Aqabah this month].

In fact, concerning statements on Jerusalem, the Likud's statements are not different from those of the Labor Party. But, what concerns us is what is going on the ground. Therefore, let us say that we want to deal with the prime minister-elect, not the prime minister-designate, and turn over a new leaf. [end recording]

Jordan: 'Possibility' Netanyahu May Attend Leaders Summit

JN0106054996 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Report by Randah Habib in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu telephoned Jordan's King Husayn. They exchanged views on the regional peace process and the need to continue it. According to official Jordanian sources, this is Netanyahu's first contact since he won the Israeli elections.

These sources noted that King Husayn congratulated Netanyahu for winning the confidence of the Israeli voters and wished him success in serving his people toward reaching a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace, which everyone in the region will enjoy.

Political sources here noted the possibility of Netanyahu's participation in the summit between King Husayn, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, due to be held in Jordan next week.

Acting Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur said there is nothing to prevent Netanyahu from taking part in this summit. He said that Netanyahu's participation will be a positive step.

Jordan: Tripartite Summit Linked to Formation of Israeli Government

JN0106164096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Randah Habib report in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our radio learned that the date of al-'Aqabah summit between the leaders of Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority will be contingent on the formation of the government of Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu, who was invited to join the summit.

An official Jordanian source said contacts are under way to arrange for the summit and set its date, saying that the summit will not necessarily convene in the first week of June as scheduled.

King Husayn of Jordan, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who met in Cairo mid-May, agreed to convene another summit in al-'Aqabah in the first week of June. They also decided to invite the Israeli prime minister to attend. However, the dialogue was then with Shim'on Peres, who lost the elections to the Likud leader.

It appears that Netanyahu agreed to attend the al-'Aqabah summit after the formation of his government, which led to linking the date of the summit to the Israeli Government formation.

Netanyahu held his first phone call with King Husayn yesterday and the two leaders discussed the peace process and the need to continue it.

Jordan: Minister Denies Postponement of Tripartite Summit

JN0206102496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet met this evening under Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and discussed items on its agenda. Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir spoke to reporters after the meeting.

[Begin recording] [al-Mu'ashshir] The cabinet discussed the Press Association law today. We endorsed 19 out of the 48 articles in this law. We will discuss the remaining articles on 4 June. This is my statement on the cabinet meeting.

Next I would like to clarify an issue that has caused controversy in some newspapers. This issue has to do with holders of Palestinian documents. Some reports said that Palestinians will have to submit a bank guarantee with their documents before they enter Jordan.

First, I would like to explain that this decision does not apply to anyone who has a temporary Jordanian passport or a Palestinian passport. In other words, these instructions do not apply to Palestinian citizens in the West Bank who carry either a Palestinian passport or a temporary Jordanian passport. These instructions only apply to people who have Palestinian documents in other Arab countries. These instructions are not completely new. In the past, people with these documents had to bring either a judicial bond or a personal guarantee from a prominent individual. On many occasions, people would say that getting a judicial bond is a sometimes hard to do. Based on these requests, a bank guarantee of 5,000 Jordanian dinars was added because it is easier to get than a judicial bond.

These new instructions on the bail bond apply only to people who carry Palestinian documents in Arab countries and not to those who carry Palestinian passports or temporary Jordanian passports.

[Correspondent] I would like to ask about the reasons for postponing the tripartite summit that was scheduled to be held in al-'Aqabah. My second question is about reports that the prime minister is expected to visit Kuwait soon.

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Actually, the tripartite summit was not postponed. It will be held on 5 June, as scheduled.

[Correspondent] What is your reaction to reports that Jordan invited Netanyahu to attend the tripartite summit?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] An invitation was not extended. Mr. Netanyahu is still not a prime minister-elect, because the official results have not yet been announced. These are final, but unofficial results. It might be a week before he is officially designated as Israel's prime minister. After this, he will need time to form his government. He is not Israel's prime minister until the new government is formed. Therefore, he was not invited to attend the summit, which was originally supposed to be a tripartite summit to discuss ways to support the Palestinian people and leadership in the final status negotiations. It will remain a tripartite summit, as planned.

[Correspondent] Does this mean that there is no intention....

[Al-Mu'ashshir, interrupting] There is no intention to postpone the summit or to invite Mr. Netanyahu at this time.

[Correspondent] How will the Jordanian Government deal with the new Israeli Government? Will there be a difference in how it deals with the Likud Party and Netanyahu compared with the Labor Party and Peres?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] The Jordanian Government signed a peace treaty with Israel and not with a specific Israeli party. We believe that peace is a strategic choice for all countries in the region and that the peace process is going in one irrevocable direction. Therefore, I do not think there is room to halt the peace process.

We believe that the new Israeli Government, any Israeli Government, will continue the peace process. We will work with the Israeli Government and the rest of the countries in the region to resume the peace process on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks in a way that guarantees the rights of the Arab nation and the Palestinian Arab people and achieves its only logical target: successful solutions and agreements on the other tracks to reach a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Jordan: Media Coverage of Official Reaction to Netanyahu Victory

JN0106121396

[FBIS Report] The following are Jordan Bureau's observations on Jordanian media coverage of official reaction to the announcement of Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the Israeli elections.

Amman Radio Jordan in English and Arabic at 1100 GMT on 1 June leads its newscasts with reports on King Husayn's comments to CNN. According to Radio Jordan, the king says he is "optimistic the Middle East peace process will continue under Israel's new right-wing government," adding that he "looks forward to working with Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu." The king said that Netanyahu called him on 31 May and "assured him that he would do his best to achieve comprehensive peace in the region," the radio says.

Amman Jordan Television in English at 1900 GMT on 31 May carries a report on a statement by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti at the beginning of its newscast. Al-Kabariti said: "I do not have the right comment on the choice of the Israeli people. However, I feel very confident that the peace process will continue, and it will ultimately reach its logical objective."

In the same newscast, Jordan Television also carries a statement by Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir to the ASSOCIATED PRESS. Al-Mu'ashshir says that "peace has become a strategic option for all countries of the region," adding: "We feel confident that the new Israeli Government will indeed pursue a pro-peace policy that would result in resumption of the negotiations on all other tracks, Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese in order to reach a comprehensive peace in the region."

Leading Amman dailies AL-RA'Y and AL-DUSTUR in Arabic and JORDAN TIMES in English on 1 June carry an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE report on acting Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur's statement that Jordan's relations with Israel "will not be damaged in any way during Mr. Netanyahu's mandate." AFP cites al-Nusur as saying that the Jordanian Government dealt with Peres "as the representative of the State of Israel," not on a personal basis. Al-Nusur notes that Netanyahu paid two official visits to Jordan after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel. Both AL-DUSTUR and JORDAN TIMES cite al-Nusur as saying that "nothing would prevent the participation of Netanyahu" at next week's al-'Aqabah summit between King Husayn, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

JORDAN TIMES also carries a "special" front-page report on al-Mu'ashshir's and al-Kabariti's comments, which were previously broadcast on Jordan Television. Al-Mu'ashshir says that "the Israeli public has elected its government and we have signed a peace treaty with the State of Israel and not with one party."

Jordan: King Confirms Syrian Attempts To Carry Out 'Extremist Attacks'

JN0306103596 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Jun 96 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn has affirmed that plans were on track for a summit in al-'Aqabah on Wednesday [5 June] grouping himself with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and that he was convinced that Israeli right-wing Premier-Elect Beyamin Netanyahu would pursue the Middle East peace process.

Speaking in an interview with four foreign journalists on Saturday, the King also said a chance should be given to Mr. Netanyahu to "shoulder his responsibilities."

King Husayn said the summit between Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) would take place on June 5 in al-'Aqabah without Mr. Netanyahu.

The King said the changes taking place in Israel would not allow Mr. Netanyahu to take up an invitation to attend the meeting, but that he hoped "a later summit will bring us together after he (Netanyahu) had formed his government."

Earlier Saturday a senior Jordanian official had said the date of the al-'Aqabah summit would not be set until Mr. Netanyahu had formed his government.

King Husayn, who is due to visit the United States in the next few days, told journalists late Saturday that "the idea of inviting the Israeli prime minister to take part in the tripartite summit had been floated in Cairo" on May 12.

President Husni Mubarak, Mr. 'Arafat and King Husayn met in Cairo on May 12 and agreed to meet again in June.

They had planned to invite Israel's incumbent Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, an architect of Israel's peace agreements with the Palestinians and Jordan.

The June 5 summit will now centre on relations between the three parties in the light of the Likud leader's victory in Israel's elections.

In his comments on Saturday, the King also confirmed that attempts had been made to carry out extremist attacks in Jordan from Syria.

"The peace process is alive and it will continue," the King told the four journalists, including an AFP correspondent. "We should not judge on the basis of election slogans(..) to suggest that it is the end of the peace process."

In his run-up to the May 29 general elections, in which he beat Mr. Peres by a whisker, Mr. Netanyahu declared that the issue of Jerusalem was non-negotiable.

He also vowed to shut down the Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), base in East Jerusalem, encourage new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and refuse to exchange the Golan Heights for peace with Syria.

But the Palestinians "have no reasons for concern," King Husayn said, adding that he was sure "that Netanyahu will be a fine prime minister in his contribution toward a comprehensive peace."

King Husayn stressed "he was not surprised" by the victory of Netanyahu, whom he had met at least twice since 1994. "Let us give the man a chance to shoulder his responsibilities and there is no reason for scepticism," he said.

"I was among the first he contacted (after his victory) and I wished him all the best. He assured me that he is committed to peace and I told him that he has my full support and cooperation to bring about this peace."

The Monarch described the Jordanian-Israeli 1994 peace treaty as "irreversible," and he was optimistic over their future ties.

"I hope our relations will go stronger and will be an example of peace between two countries and two peoples," he said.

In reply to a question on the electoral programme of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party which gave priority to security issues over peace, King Husayn said, "I assume that any government will try to make sure in the negotiations to ensure maximum security for its people. But it has also to realise that peace is necessary."

The King said he was "disappointed" by the outcome of the anti-terrorism summit which grouped in March some 30 heads of state at the Egyptian resort of Sharm al-Shaykh

"Unfortunately not much has been done. It should not have been (merely) a photo opportunity," he said.

King Husayn said "what was needed is that any government that harbours terror should not be tolerated, in the hope that we get serious constant attempts to fight terrorism."

"We have to send a clear message to them because what is the point of meeting and issuing communiques. We have to say enough is enough," added the King, who did not rule out imposing sanctions on countries supporting terrorism.

"All measures must be taken against terror which aims at destroying peace" in the region, he said.

Asked about reports of the detention of dozens of infiltrators from Syria seeking to carry out terrorist attacks in Jordan, King Husayn said, "had it not been for the vigilance of our people and those responsible for the defence of the Jordanians, we might have had serious tragedies."

"Those attempts started after the ratification of the peace treaty with Israel. It has not stopped and we are still subject to people coming across the border bringing in explosives aimed at carrying out attempts against (Jordanians and their guests (Israeli tourists) and to use Jordan as a base for operations" in Israel.

The Egyptian government daily AL-AHRAM said Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is expected to meet Mr. Mubarak in Cairo within the next two days to plan a larger Arab summit.

"The Egyptian-Syrian summit due to be held in Cairo in the next 48 hours will examine the development of events in the Arab World" as well discuss the possibility of "a wider Arab summit aimed at Arab reconciliation," said the paper.

"The summit will also look at developments of the situation in the Middle East in the light of the result of the Israeli elections," the paper added.

Cairo's push comes at "a time when coordination is required for a position supporting the peace process and ensuring that it is a balanced and just process," Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa told journalists Sunday.

The new situation in Israel "makes it absolutely necessary that we enlarge the Arab meetings at the highest level," Deputy Foreign Minister Badr Hammam said.

Jordan: Source Criticizes Statements by Syria's Talas Against Jordan

JN0306090596 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0700 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordan strongly criticized statements attributed to Syrian Defense Minister General Mustafa Talas that the Jordanian entity was created in the region to be a buffer zone between Saudi Arabia, the land of the Islamic message, and Syria, the land of Arab conquests. Talas added that this entity was also created to protect Israel and be a protective shield for it.

An official Jordanian source described these statements as hallucinations of a man who has lost his mental faculties.

Lebanon: Birri—Changing Israeli Prime Minister Makes No Difference

NC3105193696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Following his meeting tonight with President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri said that agreement was reached to issue a decree on holding an extraordinary parliamentary session during the months of June and July.

He said that the cabinet will approve the draft law on parliamentary elections at its next session and then refer it to the chamber.

Birri stressed that if parliamentary elections are not held it would be a political and democratic catastrophe.

Commenting on Netanyahu's victory in the Israeli elections, Birri said: Changing the Israeli prime minister does not make any difference to us. The tactics might be different but the end result as far as aggression and the continued occupation of Arab territories is the same. He added: When the United States agreed to give the elections priority over the peace negotiations, it was clear that it greatly endangered peace in the region. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Phalangists' Paqraduni Expects Syrian-Israeli Talks To Stop

NC3105170796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Phalangist Party Deputy Leader Lawyer Karim Paqraduni believes that Netanyahu's victory in the elections constitutes a coup inside Israel and an earthquake in many Arab countries. Paqraduni expects an extremist rightist government to be formed in Israel, contrary to the opinion of the Americans. He also expects negotiations on the Palestinian track to go backwards and those on the Syrian track not to be resumed, as well as a lukewarm atmosphere to prevail in relations between the United States and Israel, which the Arabs could exploit.

Lebanon: Buwayz Advises Wait-and-See Attitude Toward Netanyahu

NC3105200796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz returned tonight to Beirut from Paris, where he held meetings with French officials on the situation in Lebanon.

In reply to a question on the Israeli election results, Buwayz said: We must wait and see how the parliamentary majority and alliances will be formed. The Israeli policy will be formulated in the light of these alliances. He added: We must wait until the Israeli government is formed and until we know who its members are. Afterward, we will judge its policy and adopt the appropriate stand.

Buwayz said the touchstone is Netanyahu's acceptance of the Mardid principles, which are based on the land-for-peace formula and the implementation of UN resolutions, including Resolution 425 regarding Lebanon. He noted that the monitoring committee of the April understanding is a temporary committee and is not a mechanism for the peace process.

Lebanon: Hizballah Envoy in Tehran Comments on Israeli Elections

NC0106193796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Interview with Lebanese Hizballah representative in Tehran, 'Abdallah Safiy-al-Din, by 'Isam Hasan in Tehran—date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] In light of the results of the Israeli elections, what are your expectations of what might happen— following Shim'on Peres' defeat in the elections—on the regional level, particularly concerning Lebanon?

[Safiy-al-Din] Regarding the Israeli elections and the Likud's victory over the Labor Party, we have never seen any difference between the political parties in that entity which usurped Islamic Jerusalem and the land of Muslims and the oppressed Palestinian people. The results of the elections will not have much impact on the developments in the region, because in our view, this era is one of resistance and of driving out the occupiers from the usurped Islamic land. For us in Hizballah, we see no big difference between the two Israeli parties. Both parties carried out massacres against Muslims, usurped their land, and strove to humiliate the resistance in our area. For this reason, we cannot see any dramatic developments as a result of the elections. What concerns us is that the Islamic Resistance and the resisting generation will grow stronger as they see that the foundling society proves daily that it is built on feud and hostility to Arabs and Muslims and cannot imagine that societies, other than the Jewish society, exist. We cannot see any major development, other than that the Israelis will try to put more pressure on the Muslims and the resistance fighters to get the greatest possible gains and concessions from the Muslims and Arabs.

Syria: Al-Asad Receives Clinton Letter on Commitment to Peace

JN0106175596 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received a letter from U.S. President Bill Clinton today, dealing with the latest developments in the region.

In his letter, President Clinton stressed that the United States is still committed to the objective of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

Syria: Israeli Election Results 'Do Not Concern Syria'

JN3105172596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 31 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The results of the Israeli elections will continue to have meanings and repercussions on all levels. However, discussion of the various possibilities, over which analysts differ, will be a miscalculated adventure if it is done away from the real facts created by the long peace process during the Likud government, which was followed by the Labor government, as well as the possibilities that are governed by the nature of the Israeli decisionmaking on the one hand, and the requirements of just and comprehensive peace, on the other.

The issue here is not who won or who lost, because Syria did not wager on this or that party, and did not link its peace positions to this or that person. Therefore, the Israeli elections campaign and its results do not concern Syria in view of its pan-Arab and national constants and the fact that it adopted peace as a strategic option over a quarter of a century ago.

True, the Israeli elections and their results represent a new landmark that put the peace process at a new crossroad. However, we cannot forget a host of facts that make predictions difficult, and therefore, put us all in a waiting position. The peace process began in Madrid in 1991 during the Likud government led by Yitzhaq Shamir, whose extremist positions were known. Labor Party leader Yitzhak Rabin then proved that he was no less extremist. He led the peace process away from its objectives on the Oslo and Wadi al- 'Arabah tracks. Achieving a just and comprehensive peace remained far-fetched during the rule of Shim'on Peres who led the Labor Party and the Israeli Government following the assassination of Rabin. Israel did not offer anything serious toward achieving peace, and was satisfied with maneuvering. Israel opened the door wide for the rise of extremism, which proved that it dominates the Israeli political arena.

True, the Labor leaders were closer to the peace slogans than the Likud leaders, but they did not differ over keeping away from the essence of peace that is based on implementation of the resolutions of the international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle. Hence, we should read the facts of the long peace process instead of reading the Israeli elections and the results. It should be emphasized that the peace process began a stalemated course during the Labor Party government, and remained hostage to the Israeli strategy that apparently did not include a decision to achieve just and comprehensive peace. This strategy seeks domination and hegemony, swallowing up Arab resources, wealth, and water, as well as opening borders and markets with the Arabs, and undermining their dignity and identity.

The issues here is not who won or lost, but rather the need for an accurate and objective reading of the peace process and the obstacles that hindered real progress despite the long time and intensive international efforts made toward this objective. Israel's distance from real just and comprehensive peace remained almost the same during the Likud and Labor governments since the beginning of Madrid conference. This distance is represented by Israel's hysterical rejection of implementing the international legitimacy resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. Therefore, determining the slight differences between the competing parties and individuals is impossible. Israel's strategy does not change with a change of faces and names. What counts is a change in positions in a manner that will lead to Israel's commitment to the resolutions of international legitimacy. This is an international responsibility that the international community should shoulder, because it is the only party that is capable of changing the Israeli mentality, whether it is the Labor Party or the Likud. This is true if the world is committed to the historic peace opportunity, which is being eroded by the Israeli positions that are full of arrogance, conceit, and superiority even in its dealings with the international community and legitimacy.

Syria: Country Said Not Concerned About Outcome of Israel Vote

JN0106151796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Following the storm of the Israeli elections, a new storm of analyses and forecasts started. This new storm relates to the results and the negative or positive effects on the region as a whole and on the peace process in particular.

Although we stress that observers are now reconsidering their calculations, we would rather not make any hasty forecasts or jump to conclusions. This is especially the case since we believe that the elections and their results are a domestic issue which concerns only Israel, those who wagered on this or that party, and those who threw their cards in favor of this or that personality. Regardless of who has the largest number of seats in the Israeli Knesset and who is in power in Israel, Syria is only concerned about what will help it regain its territory and national and pan-Arab rights. Syria views every change only from the perspective of its national and pan-Arab principles and the extent to which these changes meet the requirements of the just and comprehensive peace, whose principles, terms of reference, and foundations are well known.

Everybody knows that, in all cases and circumstances, Syria has never felt weak or disheartened and never retreated from a position, bargained over land, or abandoned a right. All means of pressure and extortion and the attempts of temptation, maneuvers, and deception failed to push Syria into accepting what it does not want. The only interest we have in the results of the Israeli elections is to express our interest in the just and comprehensive peace which remained a strategic option in Syria's policy. This position proved to be credible through the response to the peace efforts since the start of the Madrid conference almost five years ago. This interest is genuine because we believe peace provides a means to liberate all our territory and regain all rights and a way to security and stability in the region that would benefit its people and the world.

According to this yardstick only, Syria is concerned about what will return the Golan Heights to it in full and about what will return southern Lebanon to its owners and guarantee the Palestinian people's rights. Undoubtedly, peace provides a genuine interest for everybody in the region and the world. Therefore, it is a noble objective, which one must seriously work to achieve regardless of who is leading the Israeli Government or who has the majority of seats in the Knesset. This is true if Israel intends to make a decision for peace and keep the road to peace open after a long period of obstacles, inaction, and dormancy which may squander the peace opportunity.

Syria, together with all the nation's masses, is keen to regain its territory and rights and to arrive at a just and comprehensive peace that would provide security and stability in the region in the absence of aggression and occupation. In this case, it does not matter who won and who lost. The wisdom of waiting reigns supreme for the time being so that one can read the positions and facts in a balanced and precise way. But the firm fact remains, which is that the ball of peace remains in Israel's court, where it has been since the start of the Madrid Conference when the Likud Party under Yitzhaq Shamir was in power and after that when a Labor government was in office under Yitzhaq Rabin and then Shim'on Peres.

Syria, with its clear positions, continues to see in peace a regional and world interest, the arrival at which requires supporting the resolutions of international legitimacy and setting matters straight as regards the principles of peace, the foundations of the Madrid Conference, and the role of the fair and full partner which the United States must play. It would be futile if the world community and the peace process cosponsors surrender to this dangerous kind of attempt to make the peace issue, which is a noble objective, dependent on the domestic situation in Israel; and, consequently, to find excuses for Israel's evasion of the resolutions of international legitimacy and even to justify this kind of Israeli defiance of international legitimacy and the will of the world community, which continues to bear the biggest responsibility to force Israel to abide by the principles of just and comprehensive peace and meet its requirements.

Syria: U.S. Urged To Resume Talks on Syrian, Lebanese Tracks

JN0106103096 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0740 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Damascus, 1 Jun (SANA)—[passage omitted] The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that the heated Israeli election campaign showed that the Likud and Labor parties differ over everything except the requirements of the peace process based on the Madrid formula. They both agreed not to acknowledge these requirements.

In it commentary, the paper says that in their electoral statements, the leaders of Israeli parties rejected the bases and requirements of a just and comprehensive peace. Indeed, they competed to show extremism toward all issues related to achieving this peace. The parties — led by Likud Party leader Netanyahu, who has now been elected prime minister of Israel — announced that they want to keep Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel, that they will escalate the building of settlements in all the occupied Arab territories, and that they will not give up any settlements.

AL-THAWRAH says: With the end of the election battle in Israel, which gains its strength from U.S.

support, the United States is urged to resume the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks on the bases defined by the U.S. initiative, which called for a peace conference to rescue this process from the impasse it reached as a result of Israeli intransigence.

Syria: Press Urges Israel To Return to 'Pillars' of Peace Process

JN0106073096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Regaining the Territory in Exchange for Peace," TISHRIN discusses the peace process and the obstacles it has faced since the Madrid conference.

TISHRIN calls for returning to the bases and principles of this process. It says these bases and principles must not be tampered with or circumvented under any circumstances. The paper says that the most important pillars of the peace process are the land-for- peace principle; a genuine and serious implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425; and Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, southern Lebanon, and Jerusalem.

TISHRIN stresses that Israel is responsible for the stalemates, obstacles, and failures suffered by this process. It says: The Israeli pretexts and demands were about to abort the peace process and lead it to a dead end. The allegations about the need to maintain the occupation, the settlements, Israel's security, and the peace-for-peace axiom threaten the bases and principles of a genuine just, comprehensive peace and places the peace process in jeopardy. The aggressive Israeli practices and their resorting to military force further complicated the situation, charged the atmosphere, and escalated tension and turbulence.

TISHRIN says that for the wheel of this process to turn again, it is necessary to go back to the bases and principles of this process and to genuinely abide by and respond to these bases without any deviation.

TISHRIN concludes: It is certain that if sincere intentions and constructive willpower are available, then the road to peace is clear. It does not need cheating or tricks. This road begins with giving back the territory in return for peace. In other words, this means that ending the Israeli occupation is an essential first step for arriving at a just, comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In two separate comments on the same subject, AL-THAWRAH stresses that full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and abandoning the ideology of expansion and hegemony are indispensable.

AL-THAWRAH says that events have again proved the soundness of Syria's position on the issue of a just, comprehensive peace based on the UN resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. Israel must fully withdraw from all occupied Arab territories and give up the ideology of expansion and hegemony.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria does not wager on persons or parties. Peace has pillars, principles, and requirements. Without these, there can be no peace. There is no guarantee of anybody's security and stability without commitment to those pillars and principles.

AL-THAWRAH believes that, as the Arabs adhere to peace, they must adhere to their rights and the restoration of their territories. The Arab nation believes that it will inevitably overcome the current difficult circumstances, the paper notes.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: It does not concern Syria who forms the Israeli Government. Syria is concerned about the return of the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the occupied territories. The road to peace begins by ending the occupation, intimidation, and aggression.

Syria: Press Calls For Unified Arab Stance on Peace Process

JN0206075096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH comments on the Middle East peace process in light of the stalemate in the peace negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks as a result of Israeli pretexts, most recently the pretext of the elections.

In an editorial headlined "Peace Is Most Important," AL-BA'TH says Syria is not concerned with the competition between the Labor and Likud. Syria will not get involved in efforts to make the peace process succeed depending on the rise of one party leader or another. The Syrian-Lebanese attitude is clear to all observers. The two countries have a unified position on the peace process.

AL-BA'TH adds: Perhaps the major party on which hopes for progress in the peace process are pinned is the U.S. Administration, because it launched the Madrid initiative and because of President Clinton's continuing commitment to the peace process, which he reiterated in his letter to President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday.

AL-BA'TH says: In this context, we want to emphasize that the U.S. commitment to the peace process must mean not allowing Israel — whether under Labor or Likud — to pursue a self-styled policy without heeding international legitimacy and UN resolutions. The Arab party immediately concerned with the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region should now reassess the past and aspire for a rewakening that ends the fast pace of normalization and leads to full support for the position of Syria and Lebanon, which defends the existence and fate of the nation.

TISHRIN comments on Israel's aggressive policy and its continued violation of the April understanding through its shelling of villages, towns, and cities in southern Lebanon, thus jeopardizing the lives of Lebanese civilians. Israel is doing this on the pretext of operations by the Lebanese national resistance against the occupation forces.

The paper says: Facts belie Israeli claims in form and content. Even during the election period, which Israel wanted to be quiet and peaceful, it deliberately escalated the situation in southern Lebanon. Israel's violation of the April understanding was premeditated. Its pretexts are meant only to cover up its aggressive practices and violations — which are condemned and rejected — of the April understanding. By pursuing this policy, Israel not only seeks to destroy and threaten the understanding, it also wants to push the situation in the south to the brink of the abyss. This will have serious consequences for the entire Middle East.

TISHRIN notes that Israel's aggressiveness has never achieved peace and security. Developments show that this aggressiveness is the source of dangers, threats, and disorder, and the main cause for the complication of the situation.

The paper concludes: Peace and occupation are irreconcilable. Achieving peace requires ending the occupation and returning the south to its people, as stipulated by the resolutions of international legitimacy. This will ensure peace, tranquility, and stability in southern Lebanon.

In a commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Who rules Israel is a domestic issue that concerns Israel alone. Those who wagered on this or that party and put all their eggs in the basket of this or that person — as a result of illusions they had entertained — are the only people who are now confused in their calculations.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It is important to stress that Israel — first under the Likud, led by Yitzhaq Shamir, then the Labor government, under Yitzhaq Rabin, followed by his successor Shim'on Peres — has not done anything that shows its goodwill toward a just and comprehensive peace. In addition, the peace process has faced many Israeli obstacles and mines. This led to a kind of stalemate by the end of Peres's term in office.

AL-THAWRAH says: Given the above, we were not concerned with the Israeli elections, and we did not wager on the game of doves and hawks. Our wager has been on the international community's awareness of its responsibilities and the realization of the two main sponsors of the peace process that peace is a regional and international interest.

The paper asserts that the international community must try to change the Israeli position that rejects peace and its requirements. This will make it possible to relaunch the peace process and put it back on the Madrid track.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The real question that needs to be answered: Will the changes inside Israel lead to further retreat and a stalemate in the peace process, or will they lead to sincere progress? This is the question and wager. Anything other than this is an illusion.

Syria: Radio Reiterates Position on Israeli Election Results

JN0206173896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 2 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The peace process that began in Madrid nearly five years ago aimed at realizing just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle. This was the gist of the U.S. initiative that was launched before the Madrid conference and which paved the way for it.

However, Israel's evasion of the peace requirements, the Madrid terms of references, and the international resolutions prevented the realization of a just and comprehensive peace in the region, which is sought by the cosponsors of the peace process and the international public.

The U.S. Administration's role as a sponsor and partner was clear in the Washington talks and in the tours of Secretary Warren Christopher and the U.S. envoys in the region. It was also clear in the two important summit meetings between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton in Geneva and Damascus.

Throughout the peace process, Syria has been eager to render the peace efforts successful and rescue the peace process from the stalemates caused by Israeli maneuvers. This is something of which the U.S. Administration and all political circles in the world are aware.

Syria's position has always been clear and frank, despite all the bottlenecks faced by the peace talks. This position emphasized that peace is a strategic option for Syria, but this peace is a just peace that secures the return of the entire land, full sovereignty, and balanced [mutawazin] and equitable [muta'adil] security that realizes security and stability for the region and the world.

Syria has never paid attention to the political and partisan changes in Israel. Its position is based on its eagerness to have just peace and the Security Council resolutions which constitute the bases of the peace process. Therefore, what concerns Syria is commitment by any Israeli Government to the bases of peace and its respect for the desire of the international consensus to realize just and comprehensive peace. This was emphasized by President Bill Clinton yesterday in his message to President Hafiz al-Asad when he declared commitment to the objective of just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

Secretary Christopher also emphasized in a statement that Washington will continue its intensive efforts to realize comprehensive peace in the region in the most effective manner. This means the U.S. Administration's responsibility is greater in curbing the Israeli endeavors to construct settlements and entrench the occupation. These actions are a defiance to the UN resolutions and the bases of the peace process.

The emphasis in President Clinton's message to President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday of the U.S. continued commitment to just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region shows clearly that the circumstances through which the region passed have distanced it from the path of the aspired peace. Occupation, demolition of houses, escalation of the arbitrary shelling of Lebanon, and continued evasion of the peace requirements are factors that do not lead to the just and comprehensive peace stipulated in the Security Council resolutions and on which the U.S. initiative and Madrid conference were based.

Undoubtedly, the awareness by the United States of the faltering and deteriorating condition of the peace process obliges it to shoulder an important responsibility as a sponsor and honest partner to pressure Israel to commit itself to the Madrid framework and the terms of references of the UN resolutions.

The realities and bloody events in the region show that there will be no peace with occupation, and that no peace can last unless it guarantees rights, security, and dignity for all parties. This is only guaranteed by the honest implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy. This is what will lead to real peace and ensure security for all — peace to which all peoples of the region are partners, in which they are convinced, and which they are willing to defend.

Syria: TISHRIN Analyzes Outcome of Israeli Elections

JN0306101796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 3 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Facts Confirmed by Israeli Elections," the newspaper TISHRIN editorial addresses Israeli elections and the Likud election win, saying: The general hallmark of these elections was intransigence over the issues pertaining to security, peace, and territory. One must examine some of the facts produced by these elections, chief among which is intransigence. The Labor Party, which previously expressed a willingness to accept territorial concessions in exchange for peace and a comprehensive settlement, backed down on its positions and slogans and entered a heated race with extremist parties. That is why it committed a savage aggression against Lebanon and stepped up repression and terrorism against the Arabs of the occupied territories. This retreat by the Labor Party fostered extremist positions in the Israeli community and strengthened hard-line parties. Hence, it was only natural for the Likud to win the national vote, for the extremist fundamentalist religious parties to obtain additional seats, and for the aggressive military establishment to increase the number of its representatives in the Knesset.

TISHRIN adds: As a matter of fact, the Labor-led government was not honest in its quest for peace in the first place. It did not make serious efforts to achieve it, and made no efforts to convince the Israeli public of the need for peace, and of the dividends it could yield. Hence, the reluctance of this government and its circumvention of a comprehensive solution through secret and separate deals have eventually caused peace to lose its appeal in the Israelis' eyes. This also prompted further extremism and intransigence during the voting process. The second fact is that the outcome of these elections might further complicate the peace process. Our judgment is based on the slogans the Likud upheld during the election campaign. In this regard, it must be indicated that the peace process was not in good shape under the Labor-led Israeli Government. If the Likud tries to uphold the election slogans Netanyahu announced during the election campaign that Israel will not withdraw from the Golan or Jerusalem if he were elected prime minister, and that he, as he said yesterday, will work to realize the Zionist dream of bringing in more Jewish immigrants, this does not auger well for the peace process. We do not want to speculate on the policy Netanyahu will pursue. However, Netanyahu's compliance with the Likud election platform will blow up the region and foment tension and instability in it.

TISHRIN goes on to say: The third fact produced by Israeli elections is that the concessions some Arab sides made to encourage the Israelis to forge ahead in the peace process have failed to achieve their objectives. As a matter of fact, these concessions, the rush to placate Israel, and the attempts to effect normalization with it have only been counterproductive. The Israeli community interpreted this rush toward Israel as a willingness on the Arabs' part to accept the colonialist Israeli proposals.

The paper says: The fourth fact is that the efforts made by the U.S. Administration to créate the appropriate climate for Peres' success were met with defeat. It is true that this administration provided him with unlimited support. Nonetheless, these efforts did not produce the desired outcome. The reason is that the Israeli society is opposed to peace.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: Now that the Israeli elections are behind us, we would like to affirm that Damascus did not wager on a single party or person in Israel. It judges the behavior of any Israeli party through the policy it pursues on the ground. It determines its position toward this or that party based on the latter's readiness to make available the requirements of just and comprehensive peace. Syria believes that complete withdrawal from the Golan is the key to peace. It will not accept any other formula.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Daily Reports Taleban Leader Survived Coup Attempt

LD0206082596 Tehran IRNA in English 0518 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, June 1, IRNA — The Kabul-based daily 'DARIZ' here today disclosed that Taleban leader, Mulla Mohammad Omar, survived a coup attempt against him from within militia ranks last Tuesday. [28 May]

DARIZ added that although the attempt against Mulla Omar by chief of administrative affairs, Mulla Ihsanullah, did not succeed, the rival faction managed to arrest and imprison a group of Omar's close aides including the so-called minister of public health Mulla Baluch.

Referring to the differences between Omar and Ihsanullah particularly after the Taleban defeat in Lowgar Province last month, it pointed out that moderates among the Taleban militia are pressing for an end to the military siege of Kabul, whereas the extremists insist on continuation of their attacks till the overthrow of the President Borhanoddin Rabbani's government.

It is also said that another Taleban leader Mulla Mohammad has called for a compromise with Rabbani.

Afghanistan: Rabbani Calls On Jehadi Leaders To Take Steps for Peace

LD3105181096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan president has called on the jehadi leaders to take firm steps for the consolidation of national reconciliation and the strengthening of peace.

According to news sources, Borhanoddin Rabbani regarded the recent four-year long fighting in Afghanistan as a conspiracy by the enemies of Islam and world arrogance. In meeting peace council members of Nuristan Province, Rabbani regarded the political-military alliance of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and the government as a positive development in Afghanistan's situation and a rational action. The Afghan president regarded the present situation in Afghanistan as most appropriate for a peaceful solution of problems and for consolidation of peace. He called on all jehadi groups to take action on this path.

On the other hand, the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, led by General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, called for a meeting of all existing groups in Afghanistan to prepare the ground for a peaceful solution of Afghanistan's problems and for an end to differences through peaceful talks. Emphasizing Afghanistan's national unity, independence, and territorial integrity, this movement called on the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference to play a more active role in the restoration of peace and democracy in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Taleban Forces Reportedly Capture Provincial Capital

LD3105143896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1309 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] TEHRAN, May 31 (Itar-Tass) — Armed units of the Taleban opposition movement, operating in the central Afghan province of Ghowr, captured Chaghcharan, the province's administrative center, on Thursday evening [30 May].

Reports received here today indicate that the Talebans killed 50 government soldiers and captured about one hundred others during the fighting for Chaghcharan. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Wajed 'Fears Subtle Rigging' Set for Elections

BK3005050896 Hong Kong AFP in English 0436 GMT 30 May 96

[Report by Quatrina Hosain]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, May 30 (AFP) — Sheikh Hasina Wajed spent two years campaigning for polls under a neutral administration, but as they finally draw near she says she still "fears subtle rigging" in Bangladesh's June 12 vote.

"Rigging has become systemised over the past 20 years," she told AFP during a two-day campaign tour ending Thursday. "Mechanisms have been built into the system. I am worried about rigging in a subtle way."

Holding elections under a neutral caretaker government was a key demand of Wajed's Awami League during two years of political stalemate here. The crisis ended when former prime minister Khaleda Zia — Wajed's arch-rival — yielded on this key point before resigning in March.

Despite her concerns Wajed is hopeful the present government led by Muhammad Habibur Rahman can ensure a fair election.

"The caretakers are doing their best to hold free elections. However, the president may interfere," Wajed said. "We have two governments." Bangladeshi President Abdur Rahman Biswas is a member of Zia's

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). But Wajed appears confident ahead of the parliamentary polls.

"We have mass support," she said. "I am very confident of the people's support. It's better than last time."

In the last contested elections in 1991, held after the restoration of democracy the previous year, the Awami League lost to the BNP.

During Wajed's campaign tour, hundreds of people lined up in small towns and villages across northern Bangladesh, chanting slogans and holding aloft brightly decorated replicas of boats, the Awami League election symbol. Voters who cannot read here recognize the party they are voting for on the ballot sheet by the election symbol.

Wajed addressed large political rallies in more than 15 places, each time bitterly criticising the BNP.

"The people are fed up with the BNP and want a change," she told her cheering supporters.

Light-eyed and charismatic, Wajed led a series of strikes against Zia, finally forcing the former prime minister to step down.

But Wajed is bitter that Biswas has retained the key defence ministry portfolio, and suggests he is not a neutral head of state. "He cannot forget that he is a party man. He forgets he is the president," she said, insisting that the president should not hold the defence portfolio in a parliamentary democracy.

Wajed categorically denied any involvement in a failed military coup earlier this month. "I have heard that they are trying to involve," she said, adding that such allegations are "simply not true. We are going to win. Why should we do these things?"

The trouble began when Biswas sacked two senior army officers, accusing them of talking to unnamed politicians, saying that he had tapes of the conversations. The sackings led to an abortive rebellion led by former army chief Lieutenant General Abu Saleh Muhammad Nasim and other officers, quickly quelled by troops loyal to the president.

Nasim and several other officers are under arrest and are being investigated by a military court of inquiry, which is expected to submit its findings by June 5, one week before the elections. Wajed insists the accused be allowed to give their side of the story. The inquiry, she said, should follow army rules. But she admits the incident has worried everybody and fears it could still ruin the elections, pointing the finger at the BNP.

"If they have any bad motive, they can foil the elections," she said. But Wajed seems confident most sections of the military do not wish to meddle in politics again, pointing out that the army has had plenty of chances to do so over the past few months.

The Awami League leader also called for Bangladesh to adopt a free market economy and attract foreign investment. "We have to adjust to the world situation and that is a free market economy and private sector investment."

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Awami League leader blames Bangladesh's economic difficulties on alleged corruption by the BNP as well as "indecisiveness and lack of initiative". They wanted commissions on everything, and discouraged investors in the process, she said.

Bangladesh: Nationalist Party Presents Election Manifesto

BK0206075896 Dhaka THE DAILY STAR in English 19 May 96 pp 1, 12

[UNB report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] yesterday announced its election manifesto pledging to build up a self-reliant Bangladesh through fulfilment of basic necessities of food, clothes, education, healthcare and housing, and achieve prosperity in all important sectors.

The manifesto, announced at a crowded press conference at the party's Kakrail office, emphasised productive employment as an effective "weapon" for poverty alleviation.

At the press conference, BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia gave a brief analysis of the 126-point manifesto, covering all aspects of national issues including political approach, economic programmes, industries, agriculture, education, social reforms, religion, administration as well as state security and foreign policy.

Expressing concern at the reduction of per capita income with the growth of population, the BNP manifesto released just 24 days ahead of the ensuing parliamentary election, suggested increase of GDP from 7 percent to 10 percent to bring about a qualitative change in national life.

It also stressed the need for political stability and social peace for economic development.

The BNP manifesto also gave the assurance of utilising the most modern technology to build up a prosperous democratic state and to flourish its economy.

It suggested reforms in prisons, enhancement of status of officials and employees of the Republic and constitution of a pay commission to increase their salaries and all measures to uphold independence of judiciary in the interest of establishing rule of law.

The manifesto says, "BNP believes in decentralisation of administration and participation of people in all development activities within an institutional framework."

BNP, in its election manifesto, committed to taking the initiative for turning district and thana [subdistrict] councils into central points of development. The party pledged measures to make the union councils more effective and dynamic to upgrade those to full-fledged local organisations.

BNP also said that it would restore the 'Gram Sarkar' [Village Government] system, introduced by late President Ziaur Rahman. It will take more extensive programmes to check population boom and strengthen the education system and food for work programmes.

In view of extensive losses in garment and other industries and trades in last two years due to "unwanted political activities", BNP pledged to provide the industries with necessary economic and revenue support to help them make up their losses.

BNP will formulate laws and rules necessary to give incentives to the private sector and reform bureaucratic infrastructure. It will allocate funds on priority basis to the vital sectors including poverty alleviation, communication, power, agriculture, education, research, health and family planning.

According to the manifesto, BNP will take measures to attain self-sufficiency in textiles, medicines, papers and other essential goods.

It will adopt extensive programmes for proper housing of middle class people and low-income groups. Programmes will also be taken for promotion of socioeconomic condition of women and for child welfare. It will also ensure supply of water in all towns and cities including the capital.

BNP will take effective measures to make the agriculture sector profitable to ensure fair price to the growers.

The BNP manifesto also pledged to take measures for disaster management and for supply of gas to the northern regions of the country with the construction of the Jamuna bridge.

It also stressed the need for a peaceful solution of the hill tracts problems and communal harmony among all communities in the country.

Pledging to adopt a national water policy, BNP pledged to take all possible steps to reach permanent solution of water sharing problems with India.

Referring to the foreign policy, BNP reiterated that it will not renew the 25-year treaty with India, with a commitment that no country will be allowed to use land, water and air routes of Bangladesh to serve their military purposes.

It will continue to follow non-aligned foreign policy and maintain close relations with Muslim countries. BNP will build up a modern and well-equipped armed forces capable of defending the territorial integrity of the country and national sovereignty and independence.

Giving a brief resume of development during the term of her government, the former prime minister listed 51 sectors where she claimed substantial progress had been achieved .

BNP Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Joint Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former ministers Abdullah Al Noman and Anwar Zahid and BNP Publicity Secretary Fazlur Rahman were present at the press conference.

India

India: Prime Minister Views Government Stability, Economic Reform

BK0306012396 Bangkok ASIA TIMES in English 3 Jun 96 p 9

[Report by A. Surya Prakash: "India's Man of Destiny Says: 'Give Me Time'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Heading a fractious 13-party coalition government that is backed by the Congress party from the outside is no easy task, but 63-year-old Hardanahalli Dodda Deve Gowda, who finds himself suddenly catapulted to the national stage, is not daunted by the task.

A simple man with his heart in India's villages, Gowda touches his forehead and says "It's destiny" when asked how he felt after the United Front coalition elected him as its leader.

Having been in electoral politics for 33 years — as the leader of the opposition, the chief minister in the southern state of Karnataka and a member of parliament — Gowda is a man of vast experience in public life.

His greatest asset is that he has his finger on the pulse of rural India and therefore exudes confidence over his ability to handle basic issues. Many people see him as a man rooted in local politics but with an ability to think globally.

However, despite his strong rural base, Gowda is a political sophisticate who understands the demands of modernization and is committed to continuing the economic liberalization program initiated by former prime minister P V Narasimha Rao in 1991.

He said as much soon after he took his oath of office at the President's House. He pointed to Rao, who was seated next to him, and said the country had benefited from the economic reforms authored by his predecessor.

"Give me some time, I have just taken charge," he said in a tete-a-tete with the media soon after he assumed office.

As chief minister of Karnataka, Gowda was the only Indian politician to attend the latest meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, along with then prime minister Rao and then finance minister Manmohan Singh.

The idea was to attract foreign investment to his state, which was also the first one to hold powerful farmers' movements against the entry of multinationals. However, more than anything else, those movements are now remembered for Gowda's deft handling of them.

Conscious of the fact that he is largely unknown to the world outside, Gowda said the media must understand that he is an ordinary peasant. Gowda comes from Karnataka's Vokkaligas, a land-owning and farming community which is officially designated as backward.

He disagrees with his many interviewers that the ability to speak "eloquent English or Hindi" is an essential prerequisite to run the affairs of the country. "The world cannot understand a man from the rural areas instantly," he said.

Barring the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, Gowda can claim friends and sympathizers in every political party. And he counts on this to provide a stable government.

On the eve of him assuming office, Gowda spoke of the tasks ahead to Asia Times India editor A Surya Prakash. The following are excerpts from the interview.

Q: How confident are you of providing a stable government?

A: I have faced many challenges in my life. I will try to rise to the occasion. I never expected that such an opportunity will come to me.

Q: What will be your first task?

A: The task is to create confidence. It is a question of providing a government which has stability and credibility.

Q: What would be your approach to the economic reform program?

A: Economic reforms have taken root (in India). There won't be any change in the stand I took as chief minister of Karnataka. There may be some adjustments but you must remember that even Jyoti Basu (the Marxist leader) has accepted economic reforms.

Q: What would be your message to foreign investors?

A: All states including Bihar has welcomed foreign investment. My approach is clear from what I did as chief minister of Karnataka.

Q: Do the left parties have any reservations on economic reforms?

A: They have some views on matters like disinvestment (in the public sector) and retrenchment policies... All this will be sorted out.

Q: Did you expect to become prime minister?

A: What destiny has for each of us, we don't know. I pleaded with (former prime minister) V P Singh to accept the responsibility but he declined.

Later, everyone insisted that I accept the task, and I agreed.

India: New 21-Member United Front Ministry Sworn Into Office

BK0106090496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A 21-member two-tier United Front ministry headed by Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda has been sworn in at the center. The president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new ministers at a simple ceremony at Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] this afternoon. The new government succeeds the 16-day brief rule of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government headed by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

The 12 cabinet ministers are: Mr. Balwant Singh Ramoowalia, Mr. C.M. Ibrahim, Mr. Devendra Prasad Yadav, I.K. Gujral, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, Mr. S.R. Bommai, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mr. P. Chidambaram, Mr. M. Arunachalam, Mr. Murasoli Maran, Mr. T.G. Venkataraman, and Mr. Yarram Naidu.

The eight ministers of state sworn in are: Mr. Beni Prasad Verma, Mr. Chandradev Prasad Verma, Captain Jainarain Prasad Nishad, Mrs. Kanti Singh, Mohammad Taslimuddin, Mr. S. Venugopalachari, Mr. Salim Iqbal Sherwani, and Mr. U. Venkateswaralu.

Our correspondent reports that the Ashoka Hall was packed to capacity. Among those present were the vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan; the outgoing prime minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee; and former prime ministers Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, Mr. V.P. Singh, and Mr. Chandrashekhar. The Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. P.A. Sangma; several chief ministers; and outgoing cabinet ministers and leaders of various political parties were also present.

The new prime minister, Mr. Deve Gowda has said his government will give maximum emphasis on rural development and agriculture. Talking informally to newspersons after the swearing-in ceremony, Mr. Gowda said he will continue economic reforms. However, some changes have to be made and this will be discussed with the constituent parties. He said the AGP [Asom Gana Parishad] will take a decision on joining the government within a week. Asked about further expansion of his council of ministers, Mr. Gowda said it will take place only after seeking a vote of confidence which will take place on the 10th of this month.

The former prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, described the assumption of office by Mr. Deve Gowda as the reflection of the political will of a very large section of people.

India: Portfolios of New Ministers Announced

BK0206081996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The portfolios of the union ministers have been announced. The prime minister, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, has kept the home and agriculture portfolios with himself. Mr. P. Chidambaram is the new finance minister. He will also have additional charge of law, justice, and company affairs. Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav is the new defense minister. External Affairs has gone to Mr. I.K. Gujral, who will also look after the Ministry of Water Resources. Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan has been allotted railways and parliamentary affairs. Mr. S.R. Bommai gets human resource development, while Mr. Murasoli Maran will be in charge of industry.

— The portfolios of other cabinet ministers are:

Mr. Devendra Prasad Yadav — food, civil supplies, with additional charge of commerce;
Mr. M. Arunachalam — urban affairs and employment;
Mr. Balwant Singh Ramoowalia — welfare, with additional charge of labor;
Mr. C.M. Ibrahim — civil aviation and tourism, with additional charge of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting;
Mr. T.G. Venkataraman — surface transport;
Mr. Yarram Naidu — rural areas and employment.

— The portfolios allotted to the ministers of state are:

Mr. Beni Prasad Verma — communication and parliamentary affairs;
Mr. Chandradev Prasad Verma — rural areas and employment;
Captain Jainarain Prasad Nishad — environment;
Mrs. Kanti Singh — human resource development;
Mr. Mohammad Taslimuddin — home;
Mr. S. Venugopalachari — power;
Mr. Salim Iqbal Sherwani — health and family welfare;
Dr. U. Venkateswaralu — agriculture and parliamentary affairs.

India: Snapshot of New Cabinet Members, Policies Provided

BK0106145196 Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Jun 96 p 96

[Article by Janata Dal National Executive Surendra Mohan: "Not a motley crowd"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The contrast in the leaderships of the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] and the United Front (U.F.) is so striking that they represent two different images of Indian society. While the 12-member BJP Cabinet headed by Mr. Vajpayee had six members based in Delhi or Bombay, the 14 member steering committee of the United Front has members who have been operating in Guwahati, Patna, Lucknow, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Madras and Bangalore. None of the BJP's Ministers came from what are described as the Other Backward Classes; [OBC] and, in fact, half of them belong to one particular forward caste. Most of them are from professions like law, business and journalism. Very few have an agricultural background. The U.F's steering committee has members like Mr. G. K. Moopanar, Mr. H. D. Deve Gowda, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet and Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu whose rural and agricultural backgrounds are well-known. Many of them are from the OBCs too.

This striking contrast helps to appreciate the sympathetic chords which the BJP strikes among the elite groups which are generally metropolitan, have their social origins from business or the professions and represent particular caste groups. The near monopoly of this elite over most of the privileges in society and the entrenched institutions which guard those privileges is well established. This elite represents a very small segment of India's variegated society. But this inconvenient fact has to be suppressed by denouncing any analysis which brings it out as fissiparous, caste-based or sectarian. It resents the upstarts from the backwaters of society, from mofussil towns on the periphery of the country and from the hitherto underprivileged sections. All the hue and cry about the United Front being a motley crowd or having no common direction of policy that has been raised by the establishment arises from this perception.

But, there is no doubt that this different image of the U.F. leaders also provides them the image of a close community. There is a consciousness of kind among most of them. They represent the periphery as against the metropolis, the vast farming rural masses as distinct from industry, business and professions and a much larger social segment than what the BJP represents. This common social-spatial background binds them in an affirmity which has to be seen to be believed.

Their responses are not as sophisticated as those of the BJP's leadership with its metropolitan upbringing. But, obviously, they are more authentic.

Undoubtedly, the BJP too has a large number of people from the mofussil towns, the periphery, the farming masses and the OBCs. The former Union Ministers Mr. Satish Agrawal from Jaipur and Mr. Jagadambi Yadav from Bhagalpur are two obvious examples. Others like Mr. Kashi Ram Rana, Mr. Kalyan Singh and Mr. Kailashpati Mishra are no less important. But, somehow they have not found favour with the BJP's high command which has picked mainly one particular caste group while ignoring all the others, whether the trading communities or the farming ones, in constituting its Cabinet.

This aspect only strengthens its particular image even if the party's base is larger than it.

The U.F.'s base is far larger than the BJP's. More importantly, the community of interests arising from a commonality of social spatial background of the U.F. leaders enables it to pronounce a coherent programme. They are all committed to federalism. Recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission would be implemented by the U.F. Government to trigger a process of providing genuine autonomy to the States to enable them to work for the development needs of the people. Agricultural and rural development has to find primacy in their programme of economic reconstruction, along with irrigation, afforestation and building up of the physical infrastructure of rural and urban areas. Other equally effective poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes like promoting the spread of vast network of tiny and small scale industries will also be emphasised. It would involve enlarging the list of items for exclusive manufacture in this sector. Strengthening the panchayati raj [village council system] to undertake meaningful socio-economic area development. Far from being opposed to liberalisation, the U.F. leaders would be keen on debureaucratisation which gives immense powers to the bureaucrats who are part of the same elite of the privileged and inhibit federalisation and decentralisation of the economy. But, they will have to guard against the emergence of monopolies in the private corporate sector. They would like to create conditions of near-perfect competition.

The issue of globalisation will have to be responded to in the context of the above priorities. To the extent that agriculture, small industry and employment and poverty alleviation programmes are not hurt but are accelerated, they would accept globalisation. The entry of the multinational corporations would be welcome within these parameters. Domestic industry must not be hurt in blatantly unequal competition but must gradually be prepared to face competition.

On other issues like expanding social justice and eroding caste hierarchy and privileges based on it, the U.F. leaders will be quite forthcoming. They would also like to complete the legislative programme initiated by the National Front Government led by Mr. V. P. Singh but left untouched by successive regimes. It includes the Lok Pal Bill, freedom of the media, reform of the judiciary, electoral reforms, workers' effective participation in management and reform of the education system.

It would thus be obvious that neither is the United Front a motley crowd, nor is it bereft of a coherent and workable programme. Moreover, there is no need for apprehension that it is anti-industry or business. But, certainly, its priorities are different. Yet, its economic strategy would, in the long run, vastly expand the market by putting more money in the hands of the poor, thereby enabling them to consume much more than at present.

In the tripolarity that has clearly emerged after the last Parliamentary general election, the United Front parties have together notched up over 40 percent proportion of the total votes polled. Considering that the BJP which came up as the single largest party has secured 20 percent and the second largest, the Congress (I) 31 percent, the accumulated votes of the Janata Dal and the Samajwadi Party, the Left parties and the four regional parties, i.e., the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], the TMC [Tamil Maanila Congress], the TDP [Telugu Desam Party] and the AGP [Asom Gana Parishad] is not inconsiderable, it is a substantial proportion of the electorate.

The United Front which is now forming the government has to seek the support of the Congress (I) whom its constituents had virulently opposed. It was a difficult choice, not only for the JD (and the SP which was part of it), the DMK, the TDP and the AGP, the constituents of the National Front which had ousted the Congress (I) from power in 1989 under the leadership of Mr. V. P. Singh but even more for the TMC which had quarrel led with the leadership of the Congress (I) only recently. So is it for the Left Front.

These are marked differences in the composition of the leaderships of the three outfits. The Congress (I) represents the centralistic tendency in the Indian polity; and all those who have a vested interest in having a strong, centralised and stable authority in the country are for it. This tendency gripped the party particularly strongly in the last quarter century. During the last two decades, it gradually shifted its economic sights from an industrial agricultural mix more and more to industry. When the new economic reforms were introduced by the P. V. Narasimha Rao Government, then it metamorphosed its character even more by rejecting its old commitments to poverty eradication, till it was put on guard by defeats in several States.

The United Front leaders, on the other hand, are totally opposed to the centralistic tendency in politics or economics. Speaking on the confidence motion, the DMK's Mr. Murasoli Maran even drew the distinction between the cultural uniformity attempted by the Congress and even more by the BJP under its slogan of cultural nationalism. In fact, it is significant that even after getting into power, the BJP could not register the support of any of the U.F. constituents.

India: Communist Party To Join United Front Government

BK0206130196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The CPI [Communist Party of India] has decided to join the United Front government at the center. The national council of the party took this decision after its two-day session, which ended in New Delhi today. A party press release said the participation of the left parties in the Deve Gowda ministry is vital to strengthen the government in the national interest.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] in a statement issued today said the swearing-in of the United Front ministry has marked a new chapter in the country's political scene. The party said though the CPI-M is not participating in the government it will take active part in the functioning of the coalition.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 1248 on 2 June adds the following: "'The participation of the left parties is vital...for the work of the United Front government,' a statement released by CPI deputy general secretary A.B. Bardhan said.

"'The National Council is of the view that the participation of left parties would greatly contribute in the functioning of this government and in carrying out the tasks it has undertaken,' it said.

"'This is what the people and in particular the left masses have been looking forward to,' it added."]

India: More on Outgoing Prime Minister's Farewell Message

BK0106151196 Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Jun 96 p 7

[Unattributed Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As he prepared to demit office, the outgoing Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee today said the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] was confident of coming back to power in the "near future" with a stronger mandate to rule for "full five years in office."

In a statement to the press, he said in the "battle between two conflicting ideologies and political cultures" the BJP was sure that it would have the people's support for its "consistent espousal of the fundamental interests of this nation." He cautioned the BJP's opponents that its "endeavour" to achieve all-party consensus on vital national issues should not be seen as a sign of weakness or "isolation."

"Those who think so will soon come to rue their folly", Mr. Vajpayee said adding that thanks to the people's support his party had been growing from strength to strength.

Recalling the events leading to the formation of the minority BJP Government and its collapse, he said even his adversaries had testified that his Government did not indulge in horse-trading to improve its strength in Parliament. He said he utilised the time, given to him by the President to prove his majority, to try and give a stable Government on the basis of a common minimum programme. And his Government's agenda for a national consensus was reflected in the President's address to Parliament.

"In the end considerations other than respect for the people's mandate or concern for a stable Government prevailed over other parties. Despite having fought the elections separately and even, in most cases, against each other our Opponents came together in an opportunistic arrangement on a single-point programme of keeping the BJP out at any cost", he recalled with a touch of bitterness. He said the BJP's opponents may have succeeded in the game of numbers but not "in the higher arena of principled politics."

Mr. Vajpayee offered his best wishes to his successor, Mr. Deve Gowda, and his party would extend full cooperation to all those policies and programmes which were expected to promote the interests of the people and the country.

PTI reports: He called for "maximum mutual understanding and cooperation" among all political parties to strengthen the country's unity and integrity on the basis of secularism and pluralism.

This was impossible to achieve if some of these parties "stick to unreasonable notions of political untouchability".

The Prime Minister's statement, circulated earlier in the day, later underwent several official changes.

He said he was stepping down "with a sense of gratitude towards my compatriots and confidence about the bright future beckoning our motherland."

Stating that he was glad the people in the country had the opportunity of watching the proceedings of the two-day debate, on the motion of confidence in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Vajpayee said "our concept of, and commitment to good governance, which India needs urgently and desperately if she has to free herself of the curse of mass poverty and to progress rapidly to reach her goal of emerging as a strong, prosperous, modern and benign global power should be now apparent to all".

Referring to the acrimonious debate on the motion of confidence, Mr. Vajpayee said his party sought to rebut many "false, malicious and motivated charges that are routinely hurled at us."

"In the brief span my government was in office we gave an indication of our goals and priorities. I have immense faith in the people of this great country — in their innate idealism and in their boundless energy."

As our ancestors have demonstrated again and again, "lok shakti" (peoples' power) was capable of achieving miracles if only the "raj shakti" (governmental power) provided a conducive and supportive environment, he noted.

The "real challenge" before all the political parties and politicians today, he felt, was whether they could create such an enlightened environment.

"Are we prepared to work as people's sevaks and not as their rulers? Are we determined to rid the polity of corruption of mindless confrontation? Are we, both in letter and spirit, wedded to strengthening, India's unity and integrity on the basis of secularism, pluralism and love for her age-old cultural heritage?" Mr. Vajpayee asked.

He was of the view that no party could singly create such an ideal "Raj shakti".

India: Congress Wins 4 Lok Sabha Seats in Kashmir

BK0206132096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian National Congress has made a clean sweep of all the four Lok Sabha seats results of which have been declared so far. The latest results from Srinagar constituency has also gone in favor of the Congress. Its nominee, Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Mir Magami, defeated his nearest rival, Mr. Farooq Ahmad Andrabi, of the Janata Dal by a margin of 1,600 votes. Congress candidates were earlier declared elected from Baramula, Jammu, and Ladakh constituencies. Counting for the Anantnag seat, which was suspended yesterday following objections by some candidates, resumed this morning. Counting for Udhampur constituency will be taken up tomorrow.

India: Peace 'Gradually Returning' to Calcutta Outskirts; 5 Dead

BK3105161696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 31 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Calcutta, peace is gradually returning to the strife-torn southern outskirts of the city. The state home minister, Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, told newspersons in Calcutta that a fresh spate of violence occurred in Iqbalpur police station area this morning when some miscreants hurled bombs on a patrolling police party. One person was killed when police opened fire to disperse a violent mob. With this, the death toll in the clashes has gone up to five.

Meanwhile, curfew was again clamped from 1600 this afternoon in the Iqbalpur police station area after a relaxation of eight hours. Night curfew has also been imposed in Watganj, South Port, Garden Reach, and Metiaburuz police station areas as a precautionary measure. Alert has been sounded in the surrounding areas and the districts of Howrah, Hooghly, south and north 24 Parganas.

Iran

Iran: Radio Analyzes U.S. Motives in Allowing Sale of Iraqi Oil

LD3105215096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 31 May 96

[Unattributed commentary: "Washington's Green Light to American Companies"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] U.S. federal sources announced on Wednesday 29 May that according to the UN Resolution 986, the American companies will be allowed to buy Iraqi oil. According to a REUTER report, a U.S. federal official, who required anonymity, said: The U.S. Administration's decision comes in line with its attempt to smooth the grounds for the competition of U.S. firms with other foreign companies.

Last week's deal, reached after six years of tight sanctions against the Iraqi regime, has been an attempt to implement Resolution 986 of the UN. Under the deal Iraq would be allowed to buy up to $2 billions of oil in six months. [sentence as heard] The period, however, may be extended. Some parts of the revenues of the sale will go to providing food and medicine for the Iraqi people, some to compensate for the countries which have suffered during the Persian Gulf war and the rest to meet the expenses of the UN's operation in disarming Iraq.

From the humanitarian point of view, the implementation of the resolution has faced support worldwide, but it is evident that the great industrialized powers, particularly the member countries of the Security Council, are in a close race to gain the big share in the Iraqi market as well as receiving their outstanding debts from the Baghdad government. But to observers, the stance of the U.S. Administration, which has always blocked any reduction of sanctions against Iraq in the council, seems so interesting.

However, in the aftermath of the deal reached between the UN and Iraq over the implementation of Resolution 986, the U.S. endorsed the humanitarian deal but stressed the continuation of sanctions and warned Iraq of any misuse of the deal. The two different aspects of the stance are: first, the inflexibility of the U.S. Administration towards the Iraqi regime; and second, the sympathy the U.S. has expressed with the Iraqi people.

According to international observers the main incentive of the Clinton administration on the eve of the presidential elections has been to attract the U.S. public opinion as well as the confidence of the Persian Gulf's oil-rich shaykdoms. On the other hand, the U.S. support of the deal maybe seen as an attempt to prevent the rise in oil and oil products in the U.S. markets since with the implementation of the resolution at least 700,000 barrels of Iraqi oil will pour on a daily basis into oil markets. Therefore the recent permission given to U.S. firms by the government is viewed as an attempt to win the satisfaction of U.S. companies either to spur them to assume a more active role in the U.S. markets or through presence in the Iraqi markets.

However, the clear fact is that the only matter the U.S. Administration pays the least attention to is the deplorable situation of the Iraqi people, either presently or in the future.

Iran: Threat of New Operations Against U.S. in Saudi Arabia

LD0106133896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 Jun 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Interior announced, on Friday 31 May, that four Saudi citizens have been beheaded in Riyadh. The four were accused of bombing the U.S. advisers' headquarters in Riyadh last November 14, in which five Americans and two Indians were killed. The bombing, at a place considered highly important, worried the U.S. and Saudi officials to such an extent that Western press and mass communication means were talking about it for a long time after the incident. Meanwhile, since several Islamic organizations had accepted the responsibility for the first bombing against high-level U.S. military staff in [Saudi] Arabia, the fact was underscored that at least a part of the Islamic activists opposed to the government in Riyadh had adopted armed resistance against the American presence in their country.

A short time ago they had also threatened that they would launch new operations against Americans and their installations in the peninsula if their four comrades were executed. The threat has frightened the 35,000 U.S. citizens resident in Arabia, especially now that the government has followed through with the execution of the four. The feeling of concern and insecurity has increased among Americans in [Saudi] Arabia despite the Saudi Defense Minister Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz trying two weeks ago to belittle and dismiss the threats of Arabian Islamic activists.

It is said that anti-American sentiments highly increased among the Islamic opposition in Arabia during the crisis of Kuwaiti occupation by Iraq in 1990-1991. The widespread presence of U.S. military personnel in Arabia at the time raised opposition of many religious scholars and their followers and the continued presence of U.S. military forces after the end of the oil war in the Persian Gulf led to even stronger dissatisfaction with the Saudi and U.S. Governments, such that now a major demand by the opposition to Riyadh is the non-obedience and non-dependence of the Saudi regime on Washington. The opposition is also angry over huge arms purchases by Riyadh from U.S. arms industries.

Right now, although it is thought that opposition by most Islamic activists to the U.S. military presence in their country will be restricted to political protests and pressures, the reaction by those Muslim fighters who have vowed to vengeance the execution of their comrades cannot be flatly ignored.

Iran: Clinton Viewed as 'Main Loser' in Israeli Elections

LD3105211696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 31 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Zionist regime's new prime minister will be introduced on Saturday, 1 June. The fierce struggle of Binyamin Netanyahu to gain the prime ministerial post will make the results unclear till the last moments. If the predictions come true and Netanyahu reaches the prime ministerial post, he will face great difficulty to gain the vote of confidence from the parliament because the Labor Party, holding 35 seats, has a better stance compared to the Likud Party. Therefore the rightist groups will need the votes of smaller parties to form a government. In fact the result of the Israeli elections is envisaged as the defeat of the two main parties and the victory of the smaller ones. This plays a determining role in the future perspective of the Zionist regime.

The results till now show the growth of extremism in Israel and the dissatisfaction of Jews of the Labor Party's policies. The Labor Party's efforts to reach a developed compromise with the Arabs has faced defeat and extremist rightists will follow a hard-line policy toward the continuation of the peace process, although Netanyahu reiterated against it. [sentence as heard]

Taking the most advantages of his capabilities to bring victory for Shim'on Peres, Clinton feels dissatisfied about the selection of Jews and the American Republicans consider Clinton to be the main loser. Without doubt, the entrance of Netanyahu to the Zionist regime's prime ministerial palace will have no affect on the so-called realistic perspective of the Labor Party and the Likud Party because all the controversy on the stance of the two opposed parties in the occupied Palestine is nothing but propaganda.

After Yitzhaq Rabin became the victim of the extremist rightists, Shim'on Peres tried to attract the radical Zionists by the carnage of Qana, showing that he will not hesitate by any means to maintain the security and the interests of the expansionist Zionists. However, the disgraceful atrocities of Peres could not consolidate Peres' stance because fundamentally the heads of Israel are facing a historical cul-de-sac and anyone chosen for the prime ministerial post will not be able to escape from it. Therefore, under any circumstances the perspective of Israel is unclear. However, it is of importance that the strengthening of the rightists' stance has increased the tensions in Israel and has disappointed the supporters of the peace process.

What determines the real trend of the incidents is the requests of the Palestinians, which is to end the atrocities of the usurper Zionist regime and gaining the right to determine their own destiny.

Iran: Israeli Election Result 'Victory' for Religious Extremists

LD0106114896 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 1, IRNA — Two English papers Saturday [1 June] commented on the recent victory at the Israeli polls of Likud candidate Binyamin Netanyahu, saying that this was a manifestation of Israel's expansionism and warning Islamic countries of the dangers to regional security and stability.

"The victory of Netanyahu is a victory for extreme religious factions in israel," 'IRAN NEWS' said, recalling that the Likud party in its election manifesto promised not to return the Golan Heights to Syria and make Jerusalem the capital of Israel. It also pledged that it would refuse to honor and recognize several commitments made by the previous Zionist administration to Yasir 'Arafat.

In the light of these developments, it becomes an absolute necessity for Islamic countries to unite and ward off the common enemy, the editorial stressed, advising Islamic states to reject the ploy of U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration to divide Islamic nations and weaken their unity, making them vulnerable to further Zionist plots.

Turning to Europe, it noted that this is the right time for the continent to revise its policies in support of the so-called Middle East peace process, saying, "It has become clear that Israeli society does not favor peace. It actually voted for hostility, intolerance, expansionism and hatred."

"To accept the peace process under the present circumstances is to accept an imposed peace," it wrote, concluding that such kind of peace would "serve only as the first step toward the next all-out Arab-Israeli war."

Meanwhile, the 'TEHRAN TIMES' said that Netanyahu can bury the peace process and shake Israeli foreign policy, being the first directly elected prime minister of the Zionist regime. At the same time, it noted that even while dealing with the Labor Party of Shimo'n Peres, 'Arafat and his colleagues did not really score any tangible victory.

With the Likud Party's victory, "probably, 'Arafat and his colleagues will...realize that they have really sold out the Palestinian cause to Israel, keeping Palestinians prisoners of the Zionist regime," it wrote.

It concluded by saying that the best solution to the crisis in the Middle East is the implementation of U.N. resolutions calling for unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories.

Iran: Paper Attacks UK Minister's 'Hostile' Remarks

LD3105143496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 29 May 96 pp 2, 15

[Unattributed editorial: "Following U.S. Anti-Iran Policy Not in Britain's Interests"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Britain's armed forces minister, Nicholas Soames, while in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, said on 27 May: "Iran is a brooding force in the Middle East that appears hostile to the stability of the region."

During its heyday, Britain did colonize almost all emirates and countries of the Persian Gulf region except Iran. In other words, the only country that resisted the British colonial rule in the region was Iran. Hence, historically, Britain has not been very friendly with Iran.

Iran was also the first country in the Persian Gulf to kick the British colonialists out of Iran when [former Prime Minister] Dr. Mohammad Mosaddeq nationalized Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1952. After the collapse of the monarchy in Iran, the residue of British advisers were asked to leave the country because they were after the interests of London.

The statement of Soames is not surprising because it reflects the historical animosity of London toward Tehran. At a time when all members of the European Union unequivocally stress Iran's crucial role in maintaining peace and regional security, Soames — whose obedience to Washington is crystal clear — repeats what Washington has been baselessly alleging over the past few years.

After the collapse of what the West used to call the "Evil Empire" (which was projected as a threat to the security of the region), some of the Western countries try to project Iran as a threat to the regional security in order to continue the sale of sophisticated armaments to the regional countries for recycling the petro-dollars.

Fortunately, most of the regional countries have realized that Iran is the main advocate of regional peace and security. The glorious inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railroad and participation of a number of top officials from tens of countries showed Iran's crucial role in furthering regional peace and cooperation.

Britain had better not follow the way that the Americans have chosen to go with no avail. Adopting a hostile attitude toward Iran is not in the interest of Britain. The United States is a good example if the British politicians were wise enough to take a lesson.

Iran: Agreement on Transit Fees for Kazakh Oil Reached

LD2905102496 Tehran IRNA in English 1005 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, May 29, IRNA — Iran and Kazakhstan are reported to have agreed transit terms for their planned deal for an initial 40,000 barrels of oil per day to be swapped for export from the Persian Gulf.

According to Petroleum Argus weekly, Kazakhstan has accepted to pay a fee of 2 dollars per barrel in cash or crude for supplies that are due to be shipped to one of Iran's Caspian Sea ports in July.

The initial agreement for Kazakh crude to be refined at Tehran or Tabriz refinery and a similar quantity of Iranian oil to be provided for export from the Persian Gulf is for one year but the volume is expected to rise to 120,000 over the next ten years.

A detailed contract is due to be signed in June after a protocol agreement was reached two weeks ago.

Despite Denials from Chevron, Petroleum Argus reported that around half of the crude in the exchange will come from Kazakhstan's Tengiz field, which the U.S. firm is jointly developing with Mobil.

An emergency order signed by President Clinton last year officially bars American companies from trading with Iran, but oil swaps have been made exempt for U.S. oil firms faced with export difficulties from the landlocked Caspian Sea.

A U.S.-led consortium developing three offshore fields in Azerbaijan has also sought an exchange arrangement with Iran because of similar transport problems and pipeline delays. But after a year of talks, no agreement reportedly has been reached.

U.S. lawmakers were said by Petroleum Argus to be questioning for the first time the efficacy and wisdom of imposing secondary sanctions against Iran as well as Libya last week as Iranian oil sales to Eastern Europe have been growing.

At a House of Representatives Trade Subcommittee hearing last week, Clinton administration officials were asked to weigh up the likely impact of sanctions against the possibility of retaliatory measures against the U.S. by its allies.

A marketing drive started by Iran last year, meanwhile, was reported to have gained successes in Slovakia and Moldova in securing more outlets for crude sales to Eastern Europe.

The National Iranian Oil Company has also managed to strengthen other links with new term contracts to Bulgaria and Poland. Other successes in overcoming the U.S. ban have been reported in increased sales to Western Europe and Asia.

Iran: Role in Bahrain Unrest Denied

NC2905132796 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 14 May 96 p 7

[Commentary by Monireh Keyhani "Bahrain at an Impasse — Despotism or the Rule of Law"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

The West has always disseminated extensive propaganda on the need for the establishment of democracy; the upholding of human rights; the right to popular participation; and the need for governments to be legitimate, which has reached deafening proportions. Such deceptive — supposedly humanitarian — claims are expected to dazzle governments and nations that lack identity.

On the other hand, these proponents of democracy complacently support regimes that are conspicuous examples of discrimination, tyranny, human rights violations, and despotism. Bahrain falls into such a category of governments, governments that are a constant focus of the attention and support of the democratic (!) U.S. Government — even though there is not the slightest evidence of human rights in this country, a U.S. ally. How can the United States and all other advocates of democracy and human rights justify this contradiction between their words and deeds? [passage omitted]

The confrontation that began last year between the Bahraini regime and its government is not limited to the political elite and the intelligentsia of that country. It is an entirely popular movement that has its roots in Bahrain's contemporary political history and in the erroneous policies of the rulers. The ruling party thinks this crisis is being directed from abroad — especially by Iran.

Some political experts think it is an internal crisis with roots in economic and developmental issues. Others believe that the demands by the young people of Bahrain that unemployment be eliminated and economic problems be resolved, and their opposition to the discriminatory policies of the ruling clan, has spawned this crisis. However, which of these is closer to the truth? In order to answer this question, we should review the past. [passage omitted]

Bahrain's rather limited precedent of political participation and its constant deprivation of such participation has placed the Bahraini groups under the sole aegis of the Al Khalifah government. Opposition to the current conditions, and efforts to set up a law-abiding people's government, constitute the slogans of all the opposition groups.

Even though the Bahraini government believes its opponents are mostly Shiites who favor the Islamic Republic of Iran, a glance at the vast spectrum of the opponents is evidence of how the opposition against the regime is proliferating. More specifically, the opponents can be divided into three political groups, each with a distinctive perspective and program for the period of the transition from the current to a democratic government.

These three groups and their leaders are: First, the 'ulema and the clerics, Sunnis and Shiites such as Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri, Shaykh 'Ali Salman, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif Mahmud; second, the university staff members and representatives of the intelligentsia such as 'Isa al-Jawdar and 'Abd-al-Wahhab Husayn; and third, the nationalists and laicists such as Ahmad al-Shamlan, 'Ali Rabi'ah, Ibrahim Kamal-al-Din, and Sa'id al-'Asbul.

In view of the extensive spectrum of opponents, one can see that the repressive measures by Shaykh 'Isa have created an extensive front of opponents, with Shiites forming the core. Of course, it may be mentioned that the aforementioned individuals and their perspectives can be compared to the wheels of a popular uprising in motion.

Thus, the support of Bahrain's Shiite majority for this vast opposition front proves that the accusations of the Bahraini government regarding extraneous interference does not cut any ice. By resorting to such pretexts, the Bahraini government is definitely seeking to elicit foreign support for crushing its people. In view of the above, there is no doubt that the crisis has roots within Bahrain. [passage omitted]

Without even pondering for a moment the actual roots of their crisis and the consequences of such inattention, the rulers of the littoral states of the Persian Gulf have adopted the policy of pointing accusing fingers in all directions except at themselves. The regime's opponents generally demand reforms in the country, and if these were implemented, law and order would be established.

The crux of the matter is that as long as such regimes have the ability to crush the population, they do not stop even for a moment to assess whether or not their policies are correct. They only display a semblance of concurrence to implementing reforms when the flames of the people's fury are ignited and the continuation of their government becomes unimaginable. Till such time, they resort to putting incongruous labels and names on what is actually a revolution in the making.

The demands of the Bahraini government's opponents are: a just distribution of wealth; the elimination of unwarranted discrimination between foreigners and native citizens; a reduction in the presence of Americans in Bahrain; prevention of depravity and corruption, and Bahrain's being transformed into a center of profligacy for the region's Arabs; the reopening of the parliament; the granting of basic freedoms; and the elimination of unemployment among native residents and restrictions on foreign travel. The regime's opponents object to continued suppression of the movement by colonialistic British agents such as Henderson, and want all foreigners removed from key economic and security posts. Thus it is evident that none of these demands can be ascribed to provocation by foreign governments, as all of them come under the category of a nation's most basic rights, and no government has a right to ignore them.

The Bahraini government has no qualms in attributing the crisis to involvement by foreign countries, and in order to incite public opinion, the regime's press (all of which is under government control), in conjunction with the government, has embarked upon a propaganda campaign against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Accordingly, by relying on the U.S. military bases in the country and by crawling under the umbrella of the support of the U.S. military forces in the country, the Bahraini Government has initiated certain measures that have a national and supranational aspect but a common objective. First of all Manama has sought shelter within the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] comprised of the Arab littoral states of the Persian Gulf, and has appealed to them for assistance, initiating a propagandist outcry against a chimerical enemy.

The weak Bahraini economy and the vulnerable position of this shaykhdom has motivated the ruling party to resort to accusations (of foreign involvement) and to open a united front against the Islamic Republic of Iran, so that it can avail itself of the economic assistance of all its neighbors. Its armed forces, which have lost their ability to combat the population, are also relying of the GCC forces to pave the way for the greater interference by delegating the restoration of its security to them.

On the supranational plane, the ruling party, which has become pessimistic about continuing its political existence, has extended its needy hand toward foreign powers. The Bahraini Foreign Minister, Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah had an emergency meeting with the permanent members of the Security Council. He explained the situation in Bahrain to them and asked for their assistance.

This is while Western circles reject the allegations of extraneous interference in the Bahraini crisis and think it stems from the Al Khalifah clan's mismanagement. Western observers think that if the regional shaykhs do not embark on political reforms, they will continue to face problems. Therefore they have asked the Bahraini authorities to enter into a dialogue with their opponents in order to prevent future acts of violence. Their aim is not to vindicate the people's rights but to draw the opposition leaders into a compromise and separate them from the population. By segregating the clergy and the leaders from the population, they are seeking to divert the course of the movement and in this way to suppress it, as they did during the monarchical revolution.

The Al Khalifah shaykhs recognize the crisis and its roots better than anyone. The obsequious Arab countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, Jordan, Yemen, and Egypt and the Arab League — the last two countries receive immense financial assistance from the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf — have condemned the popular movement. The Western countries, especially the United States, have declared their unconditional support for the ruling dynasty.

The heads of the aforementioned Arab governments know their position before their people and fear the day when a similar phenomenon will emerge in their respective countries. An assessment of the situation in the countries that have condemned this uprising confirms that all of them have despotic antidemocratic systems. That is why they endorsed the Bahraini Government's crackdown on the people last month.

The Bahraini mass media and Armed Forces have resorted to two different tactics but with a common objective and have joined ranks against the revolutionaries, denouncing them as foreign tools. This is the same claim the shah [of Iran] made against his opponents. The Al Khalifahs know this movement is an uprising of people who have reached the end of their tether regarding endurance of the tyranny of the ruling dynasty. The people have tried every means to vindicate their rights but due to their failure or the indifference of the rulers, they have had to seek recourse in their last resort. By targeting the main nest of debauchery and corruption, they have overtly declared their opposition in a tone of anger and fury, which by now is familiar to the government, and are demanding their rights and the abolition of political deprivation.

Iran: Official on Duties of Fifth Majles

96LA0224H Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU in Persian 5 Mar 96 pp 2,15

[Interview with Engineer Mohammad Mir-Ibrahimi, member of PAYAM-E DANESHJU's Writer's Council, a member of the Central Council of the Union of Islamic Student Societies, and a university graduate, by PAYAM-E DANESHJU; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the performance of one of its press duties to inform the public about making the best election choices, the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU interviewed Engineer Mohammad Mir-Ibrahimi, member of PAYAM-E DANESHJU's Writer's Council, a member of the Central Council of the Union of Islamic Student Societies, and a university graduate, asking him his views concerning society's basic issues, the details of which are presented below.

[PAYAM-E DANESHJU] What is your view concerning the talk about relations with America?

[Mir-Ibrahimi] In recent years we have seen that many of the people who condemn America in their slogans speak of relations with America in various abnormally optimistic and suspicious ways. Yet the world-devouring, imperialist, and plundering nature of U.S. foreign policy becomes more evident every day, and of course the United States accepts no diplomacy except under the unequal conditions of master and servant involving the plunder of the interests of nations. Corruption, the worship of interests and worldliness are the strongest reasons for the silence and impotence of the groups that compromise in the struggles against America.

[PAYAM-E DANESHJU] What are your views concerning development and justice?

[Mir-Ibrahimi] First let us take into consideration the basic slogan for this movement. We must be suspicious of many of the things that are done in the name of moving towards an industrial society, because in effect the aim is nothing other than to move down the road to dependence, consumerism and collapse into the abyss of the philosophy of Western civilization.

Therefore, the most essential requirement for involvement in public life is to maintain the slogan about remaining exempt and achieving independence. Another major requirement is to follow regulations and reinforce the law in managing society. Unfortunately, a weakness in previous Majleses, to which the Fifth Majles will not be immune either, is the existence of individuals who are influenced by factional tendencies and leanings in society.

In view of the fact that in practice society's existing factions do not have stable limits and boundaries with criteria, in practice, the domain of decisions and movements to pass laws is drawn into prejudice, ephemeral tastes and lack of insight, and it is quite clear that a comprehensive study and perspective on society's issues will also be unlikely to take place.

If the rule of the general interest governs behavior in society, in practice the credibility of relationships and playing on relationships will disappear and the conditions will exist for discussing justice. If the criteria and credibility of the laws are based on reason, study and insight, then they will not be beset by hesitation and anxiety under the influence of an obsession with majority and minority numbers.

You now see that society's malfunctions are intensifying. Control of affairs is being lost by reasonable people and taken over by plunderers, worldly people, and the short-sighted, and ultimately this will lead to quieting and oppressing the imam and the nation.

One of the problems in our society causing increasing pain for the deprived is the changes and the practical measures being taken by the government to alleviate their deprivation. In addition to the pain of the deprivation, the empty slogans also have failed to cure their pains; indeed, they bring on a sense of despair and disappointment. The increased gaps between the classes in society are such that the farmers, the workers, and the laborers know nothing of welfare except the promises they hear about it, while the opportunists, those in appointed positions, and the unqualified management, based on a thousand justifications and explanations, plunder the Public Treasury; that is, the long fingers of unworthy individuals have caused the consumption of expenditures and the loss of wealth and good opportunities for reconstruction. On the other hand, the store of energy that was the public's confidence in the slogans of the revolution is being lost. In other words, this loss is two-sided. It is therefore very necessary here to take note of the values of the revolution and to deepen social awareness.

Another point of which the Majles must take note is the matter of self-sufficiency and economic self-reliance based on doing work with the correct definition of production, whether in agriculture or industry. The unjustifiable corruption that now dominates our mercantile and labor markets is one of the indications that this situation has developed because of the failure to follow principled policies at the macro level. In other words, a place that should have organizational goals and specific management of the organizations in society and should have definitions, research, work and reexamination, does not have these things.

[PAYAM-E DANESHJU] What is your view concerning public participation in the affairs of society?

[Mir-Ibrahimi] The basic principle that the Majles has arisen from the people themselves must be addressed; this is reinforcement and support of the general population created by God. We must say that we made a revolution so that we would have the courage to ask "why?" That is, we must consider these very people created by God as our benefactors, and we must give the rights to them.

[PAYAM-E DANESHJU] What, in your view, are the duties of the Fifth Majles?

[Mir-Ibrahimi] Among the duties of the Fifth Majles are dealing decisively with managers who are violators, compiling the Third Five-Year Plan in such a way that the alleviation of deprivation is in the heart of it, implementing supervision over these programs, and making efforts to develop Islamic culture and establish justice in society.

Iran: Special News About Elections Reported

96LA0224I Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] The rejection of the competence of some of the candidates has raised many questions and ambiguities in the minds of society. Yet officials from various classes in society have declared their willingness to be candidates. Likewise, it has been heard that despite the confirmation of four of its candidates by the Guardian Council, the Freedom Movement is boycotting the elections. Firm reasons have not yet been given from the official circles concerning the reasons for confirming these four people.

The confirmation of these four people shows a new approach and a new open-door policy. At the same time, the rejection of the competence of individuals such as Dr. Kamran, the first deputy from the city of Esfahan, and Engineer Gharibani, the popular deputy from the municipality of Ardebil, give rise to questions.

It has also been heard that a number of left-wing candidates in the city of Mashhad and in the other province centers and municipalities have had their competence rejected. This contradictory action needs serious study and analysis, provided of course that some people do not interpret this as a weakening of the government. The application of personal taste by some executive and supervisory officials has nothing to do with the good intentions of the respected Guardian Council. It is natural that in all-out political competition a few people will try to eliminate their rivals. Of course it would be good if these rivalries were carried out in a principled campaign arena and also through the capture of more votes, but with the tools that are in the hands of unscrupulous individuals, they would rather eliminate their rivals before the competition begins. It is natural that this kind of competition is much more efficient for those who consider their rivals to be strong. In any case, it is hoped that the existing situation will undergo reform in the next four years. It appears that going through the above stages is an exercise in moving toward a democracy that must be achieved step by step!

Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Majles Opening Ceremony

LD0106113296 Tehran IRNA in English 0946 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 1, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, here this morning at the opening ceremony of the fifth Majles, urged deputies to make joint efforts to build an Islamic Iran and present the world with a successful model of sovereignty of Islam and revolution.

Addressing 247 deputies and a number of senior officials present at the ceremony, the president stressed that in the past years, the Islamic Republic of Iran through its actions has proven that it does not fear U.S. plots and that it is determined to continue to tread on its clear path.

The president reiterated that the unrests of the early years of the revolution, eight years of the Iraqi imposed war, the economic sanctions and conspiracies of the past several years to isolate the Islamic Republic were all futile and today the revolution is stronger and more consolidated than ever.

President Rafsanjani, however, added that, the enemies should not be ignored and the Iranian nation must be prepared to stand against their continued plots and conspiracies. Majles should be sensitive in this respect, he told the deputies.

As to economic situation in the country, he said that the Islamic Republic of Iran, by enjoying various great potentials, should go ahead with its development project and advance further.

Underlining the need to create coordination between the Majles and the government, the president said that bills on eradicating poverty, providing insurance coverage for all, and creating an oil-free economy will be submitted to the Majles soon. The approval of such motions will solve great part of problems existing in the country, concluded the president.

Iran: Khamene'i Message Read at Opening of Fifth Majles

LD0106123196 Tehran IRNA in English
0910 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 1, IRNA — The fifth Majles was officially inaugurated Saturday morning [1 June] with a message of the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i in which he stressed that the Majles should concentrate on the goals, aspirations and the exalted values of Islam.

"Under the present conditions of the country that construction activities are going ahead with full force and greater dynamism, greater attention should be given to these ideals and aspirations," said the leader.

The leader further in his message referring to the side-effects of construction efforts, said that certain naive and simple-minded people might neglect the factor of faith and founding principles of the system and they may be overtaken by this wrong assumption that by entering the advanced phases of construction, the era of these sacred slogans, aspirations and values has ended.

This wrong assumption together with some financial and personal motivations prompt these people to overlook the values and deny the connection existing between a tree's trunk and branches with its root. To prevent such a phenomenon, the leader said the elite of the nation should stress on the fundamental role of the values of Islam and revolution in all their plannings.

The supreme leader further pointed out that the Islamic Republic has rescued Iran from the deprivations of the shah's time and reconstructed it. Any step towards scientific, industrial and economic progress and any steps to rehabilitate the country is a proof to the rightfulness of the Islamic Republic system, said the leader of the revolution.

The leader added that in creating a flourishing economy and a prosperous country, only those actions will be successful that are based on Islamic ideology and principles and are directed towards strengthening the ideals, values and slogans of the Islamic revolution.

The leader added that the deputies of the fifth Majles should be highly careful in approving all plans and projects for construction of the country and make sure to serve the dignity and honor of the nation under the values of Islam and the revolution.

Ayatollah Khamene'i urged the Majles deputies to stand against the deviated liberalism of the West in which he said the European and American nations are trapped and by which they find their spirituality and faith destroyed.

The supreme leader regarded the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) as the manifestation of national unity, solidarity and consensus among all factions and ethnic groups, saying this is one of the most glorious evidence of the unity enjoyed by the Iranian nation.

Ayatollah Khamene'i recommended the fifth Majles deputies to value this unity and focus all their efforts on strengthening it, reminding that all statements, approvals and speeches in the Majles should be directed towards consolidating the unity of the Iranian people.

Recalling that during its past four terms, the Majles had been a forum for exchange of various views, the leader said that the current term should also be the same.

In some terms, political confrontations between deputies did not prevent the Majles from performing its important duty of preserving national concurrence nor did it turn the Majles into a means of creating tension, the leader said, adding that no doubt this is a source of honor for every term of the Majles.

The supreme leader stressed that the Majles platform should not be used as a means to discourage the people and make them pessimist about the government or Majles or other officials.

Political factions, despite their difference of opinion about certain issues should focus their efforts on the progress of the country under the honorable banner of Islam.

The leader of the Islamic revolution referred to the status of parliaments in other countries and said Western parliaments are not eligible to be modelled upon from political point of view and moreover in light of political composition, a large state like Iran possessing lofty moral and political values should not follow or imitate the example of the others.

Rightist or leftist interpretations or insistence on forming political parties in the parliament and the likes are the worthless gifts brought by the West and that it is beneath the Majles to accept such things blindly.

The revered leader, pointing to the close cooperation between the Majles and the government, said the Majles is required to build close relationship with the government. He added that establishing such relationship is up to the members of parliament and that the MPs are expected to pass law enabling the government to properly administer the state and supervise the executive affairs through legal channels.

He said, however, that the Majles deputies are not expected to avoid exercising their legal authority regarding questioning and impeachment.

The supreme leader urged the MPs of the fifth Majles to consolidate their relationship with the deprived strata of society through which the MPs could recognize the priorities in their job as well as the ultimate needs of the people.

The leader called on the Majles deputies to observe piety and morality and not to take heed of the materialistic benefits.

Iran: Majles Elects Deputy Speakers, Secretaries, Commissioners

LD0206112796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] At today's session, which was chaired by the eldest Majles deputy, Seyyed Mohammad Nurizadeh, secret and written voting took place according to Article Three of the internal parliamentary regulations, and subsequently Hasan Rowhani and Mohammad 'Ali Movahhedi Kermani were elected as the first and second deputy speakers.

Elected as commissioners were Seyyed Hosayn Hashemi, Mohsen Yahyavi, and Seyyed Reza Taqavi.

Elected as secretaries for the temporary presidium were Qorban 'Ali Dorri-Najafabadi, Mohammad Reza Bahonar, Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, Seyyed Reza Akrami, Mohammad Reza Mavalizadeh, and 'Ali Movahhedi-Savoji. [passage omitted]

Iran: Fatemeh Rafsanjani on Veiling

96LA0239E London KEYHAN in Persian 9 May 96 p 1

[Report on interview with Fatemeh Rafsanjani, daughter of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, by ETTELA'AT; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Fatemeh Rafsanjani, the daughter of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in an interview with ETTELA'AT, has said that veiling is an individual and personal issue, and anyone who wishes can choose it. Ms. Fatemeh has recommended that the issue of veiling be left to the women, and in this connection, violence and actions based on personal preferences would not solve any problem.

Fatemeh Rafsanjani emphasized that the limits of veiling must be observed, but the important point is that the issue of veiling regards more than women covering themselves; a woman's behavior and dignity is also part of her veiling.

Regarding Iranians abroad, she said: We consider the Iranians abroad to be of us and do not consider any boundaries between them and ourselves. Of course, as an Iranian, I would like these compatriots to maintain their relations with Iran. She added: I know that there is a great deal of propaganda against the Islamic Republic. For example, the issue of Iranian women has become a political issue because of veiling. Otherwise, all foreign correspondents who come to Iran praise Iranian women for their progress.

Fatemeh Rafsanjani asked Iranians residing abroad to ask the embassies of the Islamic Republic what is going on in Iran. Fatemeh Rafsanjani, the oldest offspring of Hashemi-Rafsanjani, was 18 years old when the revolution occurred and was studying at Refah School.

Iran: Rafsanjani — Khomeyni Movement To Remain in History Forever

LD3005171396 Tehran IRNA in English 1433 GMT 30 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 30, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here on Thursday the magnificence of the movement launched by the late Imam Khomeyni to topple the former diabolic regime of Iran and to introduce Islam as a religion capable of governing the state would remain in history forever.

Speaking to the members of the headquarters in charge of holding the ceremonies commemorating the anniversary of the demise of the late imam, President Rafsanjani said the goals and aspirations of the founder of the

Islamic Republic should remain in history as a glowing torch for human communities.

He said that the Imam Khomeyni's movement inspired by the grand movement of Ashura was a valuable and eternal example in the history of contemporary era. He added that, the late Imam Khomeyni revived Islam previously views as a non-governmental issue and a personal relationship between human beings and the Almighty.

He referred to the hostility of the U.S. to the Islamic revolution and said, "today, the U.S. has stood against the powerful movement launched by the late Imam Khomeyni, but, world people have witnessed that Washington fails to strike even the slightest blow to the Islamic revolution and that its one year old trade embargo could not work. Iran has overcome all its hostile acts."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has the honour of pursuing the late imam's causes under leadership of his best pupil, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i. We should thank the Almighty God for his blessing," President Rafsanjani said.

He also recalled the memory of the son of the late Imam Khomeyni, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni and said the late Hojjat ol-Eslam had rendered valuable services to the Islamic revolution both before and after the departure of Imam Khomeyni.

Before the presidents speech, the head of the headquarters in charge of holding memorial service gave a report on the preparations made to commemorate the passing away of late Imam Khomeyni.

Iran: Society of Friends of United Nations Formed

LD3005134896 Tehran SOBH in Persian 26 May p 1

[News report: "Existence of the Society of the Friends of the United Nations in Iran Has Been Announced"]

[FBIS Translated Text] News service: Under the condition, when the drum of the disgrace and affiliation of the United Nations beats in the world and the world's oppressed nations identify the organization as a tool in the hands of the United States and the world authoritative powers, the daily IRAN has published a report on the formation of the Society of the Friends of the United Nations in Iran.

The daily writes that the founding board of the Society of the Friends of the United Nations has issued a statement in Tehran and announced its formation.

Efforts to acquire information about and become familiar with the world nations through the United Nations are said to be the main aim of the society. The statement says: The Society of the Friends of the United Nations began its preparatory activities few months ago. It will soon issue a list of its full members and founding board as well as the charter and the conditions of membership in the society.

Iran: PAYAM-E DANESHJU Replies to Press Supervisory Board

LD3005110696 Tehran SALAM in Persian 26 May 96 p 2

[Report by the domestic news service: "Reply of PAYAM-E DANESHJU to the Press Supervisory Board's Remarks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Heshmatollah Tabarzadi, the managing-editor of the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU, has issued a statement in response to the actions and explanations of the Press Supervisory Board regarding the revoking of his publication's license.

The statement reads: While sections of the weekly PAYAM-E DANESHJU were being printed at the KAYHAN institute, the printing supervisor was informed through officials of that institute that any further printing of the publication would be prevented. The news of the revoking of the license of the weekly appeared in the daily KAYHAN later (last Monday [20 May] afternoon).

In his statement Tabarzadi rejects the claim regarding a written undertaking to the court and a verbal undertaking to the Press Supervisory Board by the weekly's managing-editor. The statement goes on to say: 1. Nothing, in writing or verbally, had been sent to the weekly's offices by the Supervisory Board until 22 May about the revoking of its license. It shows the importance the Supervisory Board attaches to the press! 2. Under article 12 of the Press Act, the Supervisory Board does not have the right to ban or revoke the license of any lawful publication. 3. In accordance with the verdict of the 34th branch of the court, which had been convened in the presence of a jury, the managing-editor of PAYAM-E DANESHJU was acquitted. He has given no written or verbal undertaking to any authority. The law is the best undertaking and PAYAM-E DANESHJU has always adhered to it.

Iran: Ma'rufi To Stay Abroad for Some Time

96LA0239F London KEYHAN in Persian 9 May 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abbas Ma'rufi, the editor in chief of GARDUN who was condemned some time ago to imprisonment and lashes for publishing things that did not please the Islamic Republic, announced in

Germany that he will not return to Iran for a relatively long time.

'Abbas Ma'rufi gave speeches in several German cities recently about the press and publishing books in Iran. The Heinrich Boll Foundation has taken charge of Ma'rufi's residency in Germany.

'Abbas Ma'rufi criticized the Iranian regime in a speech that was attended by 300 Iranians and Germans and asked for freedom of the press in Iran. In this session, Ma'rufi said that the interrogator of the court in which he was tried was also the judge of that court.

In these ceremonies, parts of Ma'rufi's novel, *The Symphony of the Dead*, which is translated into German, were read for the audience.

Iran: IRNA Sends Conflicting Reports

96LA0224F Tehran PAYAM-E DANESHJU in Persian 5 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] IRNA's dispatch yesterday of two different reports was cause for surprise.

The first report declared that on Friday afternoon 12/11/1374 [1 February 1996] the Guardian Council met in special session. After debate and discussion concerning the campaign posters and banners throughout the city, their installation was determined to be a violation of the law.

Several hours later in another report, the newspapers were asked not to use the report that "The Guardian Council determined that the installation of campaign posters and banners is a violation of the law."

What is remarkable here first of all is that these instances are specifically covered in the Elections Law enacted by the Islamic Consultative Majles and endorsed by the Guardian Council, and there was no need for another session concerning this matter. Second, the Tehran Province general prosecutor, in view of the measure enacted in the same Guardian Council session, issued Statement M/H/110/496/74, and took the violators to the police.

Iran: Majles Denies Tehran Mayor Opportunity To Reply to Report

LD3105185796 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Tehran Mayor's Request To Respond to Majles Investigation Committee's Report Turned Down"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Majles has turned down a request by the mayor of Tehran to reply to a report by the Majles Investigation Committee.

According to the Majles Public Relations office, in its reply to the mayor of Tehran about replying to the report of the Investigation Committee, the Majles has stated: That report is in accordance with Constitution and the Majles internal regulations and no allowance has been made for responses in the relevant laws and regulations.

Iran: Arrests in Skirmishes With Basij

96LA0239B London KEYHAN in Persian 2 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] It is reported from Tehran that somewhat severe skirmishes have taken place between groups of young people, on the one hand, and the Guard Corps and Basijis, on the other, in several areas of Tehran. As a result of these skirmishes, several young people were injured and arrested.

Eyewitnesses spoke about the very barbaric behavior of the officials and the young boys and girls. Their "sin" was wearing clothes that were considered "contrary to Islamic standards." On the other hand, Engineer Shahram Jamalijam, 46 years old and an employee of the Plan and Budget Organization and the internal director of Tower No. 2 of Shahrak-e Gharb of Tehran — the same building from the fifth floor of which 'Ali Reza Farzaneh was thrown and died-was summoned to the Office of the Revolution Prosecutor. He had a heart attack in front of the entrance to the Prosecutor's Office and died. After the attack by the Basijis on Tower No. 2, he was arrested upon the order of the prosecutor of the Islamic revolution but was released on bond.

Iran: Apr-May SAFF News, Events

96LA0231A Tehran SAFF in Persian No 192, 21 Apr-20 May 96 pp 52-53

[FBIS Translated Text] **Graduation Ceremonies of the 10th Ideological Instructors Training Course**

The graduation ceremonies were held for the 10th Ideological Instructor Training Course of the Training Center of the Ideological-Political Office of the Ground Forces of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In these ceremonies, which were held in the presence of Hojjat ol-Eslam Quchani, the director of the Ideological-Political Organization of the Military, and Hojjat ol-Eslam Imani, the director of the Ideological-Political Office of the Ground Forces, students of the 10th Instructors Training Course graduated and were sent to the related units to perform the grave duty of teaching in the ideological-political centers of the military.

In these ceremonies, the director of the Ideological-Political Organization of the Military in a detailed speech explained the role and place of the teacher, and, enumerating the spiritual advantages of spreading Islamic knowledge in the society, he called on the students to understand the lofty position of the teacher.

At the conclusion of the ceremonies, the distinguished personnel of this course and also the professors of the training center were given gifts by the director of the Ideological-Political Organization.

Satellite Communication Seminar at Martyr Sattari University

The first Satellite Communication Seminar was held at the Martyr Sattari University in the presence of General Baqa'i, the commander of the Air Force; a group of experts and professors of Khajeh Nasiroddin Tusi University; the deputy director of maintenance and operations for long-distance communication of the Communication Company; and a group of satellite communication experts of Martyr Sattari University.

In this seminar, which was held for the purpose of examining the function, use, and efficiency of the communication system in terms of information outreach, shipping, reconnaissance, and strategic areas from the military perspective, a total of 50 scientific articles were sent to the Administrative Office of the seminar, from which 16 articles were selected and presented in the seminar.

This seminar concluded its work by emphasizing the necessity of expert coordination to present appropriate solutions for optimizing the use of satellite communication networks.

Sixth Fighter Unit Personnel Throw Flowers

The Sixth Ideological-Political Fighter Unit, in a joint endeavor with the command of this unit, held a joint reveille on 19 Bahman [8 February], Air Force Day, and with the coordination of the Second Naval Zone of the Military threw flowers at the self-sacrificing personnel of the Air Force stationed on this base.

In these ceremonies that were held in the presence of the representative of the religious guardian and Friday imam of Bushehr, the governor general, the military and law enforcement personnel, the ideological-political directors, the head of the Islamic Propagation Organization of Bushehr, and a group of other national and military authorities, the Friday imam of Bushehr made a speech.

Inauguration of the Equipped Medical Information Outreach at the Medical Sciences University of the Military

In the presence of General 'Ebadat, the acting commander of the Ground Forces, as well as a group of deputies and officials of the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education, the first equipped information outreach network of the Medical Sciences University of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran was inaugurated and put into operation. In these ceremonies, General 'Ebadat gave a speech commending and thanking the physicians and officials of the university for starting the operation of this extensive system.

It is noteworthy that this computerized network is used for information outreach and contains categorized information from 3,500 reputable medical journals. Also, this system, by establishing connections with the Internet and World Wide Web system, provides researchers and physicians with the latest medical information in the world.

It should be mentioned that with the operation of this center, the information needs of all the physicians and medical science researchers of the Armed Forces will be met.

The Ramazani Koran Project Competition at the Ninth Fighter Unit

The Ideological-Political Office of the Ninth Fighter Unit held a series of Koran recitation competitions in the presence of 100 persons selected from the Ramazani Koran Project classes at the Karbala Mosque. The Ninth Fighter Unit of the Air Force of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran held a Night with the Koran on the occasion of the Spring of the Koran and the Islamic Revolution Victory celebrations as well as Air Force Day, with the participation of all the military and law enforcement forces of the province of Bushehr and several military and national authorities.

In the conclusion of these ceremonies, the guests participated in the fast-breaking banquet of the Ideological-Political Office of this base.

Meeting of the Commander and the Director of the Ideological-Political Office of the Navy with the Commanders of this Force

On the occasion of the arrival of the new year, Commodore 'Ali Shamkhani and Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Saleh Ahmadvand met with the acting commander, deputies, officials, and commanders of the units of the Naval Command Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran military.

In this meeting, Commodore Shamkhani offered congratulations on the arrival of the new year, enumerated the most important activities of last year for the audience, and emphasized the issue of conservation as a priority in the affairs and efforts for extensive research toward self-sufficiency in all areas. In connection with the welfare issues of the personnel of the Navy, he said: In 1375 [20 March 1996-20 March 1997], the Navy will take positive steps in providing personnel with housing and taking care of other welfare/assistance problems.

Commodore Shamkhani in another part of his speech explained the combat, operational readiness, and arms situation of this force as at their best, and, regarding the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the superpower of the region, he considered this force to be the most alert navy in the sensitive region of the Middle East.

In the conclusion of these ceremonies, Commodore Shamkhani thanked the hard-working personnel of the Navy for their efforts last year.

The Koran Meeting at the 92d Armored Division of Ahvaz

The magnificent ceremonies of a Night with the Koran were held at the 92d Armored Division of the Ground Forces of the Military stationed in Khuzestan with the presence of Koran reciters and memorizers.

In these spiritual ceremonies that were held at the Amir al-Mo'menin Mosque of the 92d Armored Division and in the presence of a group of officials from the province, Ahmad Dabbagh, a memorizer of the whole Koran; 'Abbas Imam Jom'eh, an international reciter and secretary of the Supreme Koran Council; Hoseyn Yazdanpanah, the distinguished reciter of the country; the Tavashih-e Shohada and Al-Zahra groups of Ahvaz; and Saheb ol-Amr of Abadan recited the Koran, this human-building book, and provided special warmth to this spiritual gathering.

Entry of Two Navy Training Ships to the Oman and Pakistan Ports

Within the framework of the agreements and in connection with expanding the military recitations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Oman and Pakistan, two training ships, Khark and Lavan, entered the ports of Masqat and Karachi and were welcomed by the military officials of those two countries and members of the Embassies of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This friendly visit of the training ships of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the ports of Oman and Pakistan took nine days, and during this period, the commanders of these ships met with the navy commanders of Oman and Pakistan and emphasized the expansion of military relations, especially with regard to naval training issues of the region.

It is noteworthy that the training ships, Khark and Lavan, after the international training journey and thousands of nautical miles and after the students acquired practical training success, entered the sacred waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf and were welcomed by the high ranking officials of Hormozgan Province.

Wrestling Matches in Khorramabad

On the occasion of the 18th anniversary of the magnificent victory of the Islamic revolution, a series of wrestling matches between the 84th Lorestan Division, the children of the military personnel residing in the organizational Badrabad Housing of the city of Alashtar, and the Open Islamic University of the Khorramabad Unit were held in the Wrestling Hall of the 84th Division.

In the conclusion of these matches, ranking first were Asghar Ramazanian from the 84th Division, in the 48-kg weight category; Daryush Hemmati, in the 52-kg weight category; and Sa'id Asadi from the 84th Division, in the 57-kg weight category; Ahmad Reza Ashnanegar from the Open Islamic University, in the 62-kg weight category; Behruz Karami from the Open Islamic University, in the 68-kg weight category; Iraj Soleymani from the Open Islamic University, in the 74-kg weight category; 'Ali Ashraf Moradi from the 84th Division, in the 90-kg weight category; 'Ezzatollah Asadi from the Open Islamic University, in the 100-kg weight category; and Morad Valipur from the 84th Division, in the over-100-kg weight category.

Awards to the Winners of the Great Koran Fajr Competition

The awards ceremonies for 150 of the most distinguished participants in the great "Koran Fajr" Competition, which is held every year by the Ideological-Political Office of the Joint Headquarters, were held in the Martyr Qaram Prayer Hall of the Joint Headquarters and prizes were granted by Hojjat ol-Eslam Movahhedi-Golpayegani.

In these ceremonies, which were held in the presence of a group of the personnel of the Joint Headquarters, the deputy director of propagation and the Public Relations Office of the Joint Headquarters presented a brief report on the seven-year Koran operation of this office and said:

Inspired by the directives and statements of the grand leader and the commander in chief of the forces, Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i, and also in connection with achieving a Koranic army, the Ideological-Political Office of the Joint Headquarters during the blessed month of Ramazan, in addition to the holding of training classes and Koran sessions, holds special written competitions on the Koran as a long-term program.

In another part of his speech, he referred to the extensive reception of the personnel of the Joint Military Headquarters and their honorable families to this Koranic program and said: Many of the cultural, propagational, and academic centers receive the Koranic pamphlets published by this center every year and take steps to hold Koran competitions in their own offices and in this way bring vast publicity to the military.

The Nohad 65th Division Boxing Team Shines in the Boxing Matches of the Blessed 10 Days of Fajr

The Nohad 65th Division boxing team succeeded in gaining third rank in the Ground Forces Boxing Matches held in the presence of 12 ground forces and other independent teams at the Soldiers Club. The first and second ranks were acquired by the Ground Forces and the Open Martyr Shirudi teams.

In the individual classification, Farhad Khandan from the Nohad 65th team, in the 75-kg weight category, ranked first and was selected as best boxer in these matches.

Captain Hushang Amini-Foqaraparast, the coach of this team, pointed out the uses and advantages of this sport and also its suitability to the spirit of the soldiers, regarding it as an essential need for every efficient, combat-ready soldier.

Athletic Matches in the Navy

Ceremonies in the presence of Commodore Shamkhani, the commander of the Navy; Commander Sabur, the athletic director of the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces; Hojjat ol-Eslam Ahmadvand, the director of the Ideological-Political Office of the Navy; and a group of high-ranking commanders of the Army and Guard Corps, in the hall of the Soccer League of the Navy Regions of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran, concluded with the final game between the Athletic and Personnel Services teams.

In these ceremonies, Commodore Shamkhani spoke on the role of sports in physical and spiritual health and also the use of sports among the personnel of the Navy and their families and said: There are programs underway to invest in increasing the athletic equipment and facilities in various fields in the Navy and the military.

It is noteworthy that at the end of the final game, the Athletic team ranked first, by defeating the Personnel Services team 4 to 3. Also, the Ideological-Political team, with a sound and composed game, was awarded the Ethics Cup of the matches.

Also, in the finals of the table tennis matches of the Navy teams, the Air-Sea team ranked first.

It is noteworthy that in other ceremonies, the "Athletes Hall" and also the metal docks of the athletic facilities of Karaj Dam were visited and inaugurated.

Iran: Islamic Association Statement on 'Showdown' at University

LD3005102696 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 May p 7

["Statement From the Islamic Association of Tehran University's College of Social Science"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political service — The Islamic Association of Tehran University's college of Social Science has issued the following statement on the recent showdown between Ansar-e Hezbollah and the lecture classes of Dr. [Abdol-Karim] Sorush: In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

It is necessary to draw the attention of the university officials and students to a number of issues on the eve of the elections for the Islamic Association of the Social Science College. The Islamic Association has always been the flag-bearer of the campaign against blasphemy and discord. It has not spared any efforts in implementing the pure Muhammadan type of Islam. At present, however, we are in a situation where some individuals for any reason resort to attacking the years-old honor and prestige of the association. They are trying to abolish this holy constitution which has reached its present status because of much blood that has been shed. [passage omitted]

The students have repeatedly asked us to explain our position regarding Dr. Sorush's classes and the approach of Ansar-e Hezbollah towards them, therefore, we announce our stance as follows:

We don't intend to take any stance for or against the thinking or opinions of Dr. Sorush, and at the same time we believe that it is the duty of all the revolutionary and committed forces to defend the values of the revolution and Islam. We praise those who show enthusiasm and defend the sanctuary of religion because of their religious zeal and compassion. We also warn those people who resort to inappropriate methods to improve affairs.

We remind them of a statement made by the late professor Mottahari, who said: "They should not think that the way to protect Islamic beliefs is to prevent others from expressing their views. We can only safeguard Islam through one force and that is science, and giving freedom to opponents to express their views and by confronting them openly and clearly."

Therefore, creating an adverse climate and a tense atmosphere is not in the interest of any of the sympathizers of the revolution. The progress of science and religion can only be achieved in an appropriate and secure atmosphere and in a fully scientific and cultural climate. [passage omitted]

[Signed] The Islamic Association of Tehran University's College of Social Science.

Iran: Tehran Students Protest Against Hezbollah

LD2905224596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 May 96 p7

[Political page: "Open letter to the honorable president of the republic from a group of Tehran University students"]

[FBIS Translated Text] (Political desk: A group of students from the Tehran University have sent an open letter to the respected President Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani concerning the recent events and their protest over the approach of the Ansar-e Hezbollah group, which says:)

In his exalted name.

Your excellency, the president. The group known as Ansar-e Hezbollah, on consecutive occasions now has created insecurity, aggression, and feelings of intimidation among our compatriots and the Muslim revolutionary masses in Iran by their illegal and un-Islamic acts. At one time, they attack the circles of thought of the religious scholars and thinkers and speak of their lack of competence and transgress against their reputation threatening their lives. At other times, they create chaos at the Technical Faculty hall at the Tehran University and turn the sound academic-cultural environment of the university into a place of aggression, intimidation, and beatings. At yet other times they resort to chanting unbecoming slogans, which have nothing to do with the university movement or the academics and eventually threaten the lives of students there. On other days they gather opposite a news agency office and threaten the lives of its employees, and on another occasion they object to the screening of a film in Qods Cinema in Tehran, arbitrarily enter the premises and embark on attacking the audience.

Taking that into account, the record of the Ansar group can be described as impudent violation of the Constitution, an insult to the university and university people, and intimidation of citizens. The performance of the law enforcers has been slack with repeated failure to prosecute and enforce the law against the Ansar group. This last is cause for suspicion for the Iranian citizens. With all that in mind, first, the Ansar group must realize that because of their lack of knowledge or inadequate understanding of Islam and the laws of government, they act as enemies of Islam and freedom and fail to respect the Islamic values that were endorsed with the pure blood of our martyrs; they solely think about monopolizing thought and destroying the community; they recklessly oppose the freedom of thought and indulge in disrespect toward and violation of Articles 22 and 23 of the Constitution. Therefore, not only does this inappropriate act of theirs bring no benefit for the revolution, but it is also a factor in distorting the achievements of the revolution. Second, it is not hidden from the esteemed president and other thinkers, who have in their thoughts the growth and elevation of our beloved Iran and the Islamic revolution, that the West, in particular America, have repeatedly shown that they are not very pleased about the growth and political developments of some Third World countries. Particularly, those where various factions and ideologies can resolve their differences through discourse or through illuminating press and television discussion. The revival of the process of aggression, agitation of the political atmosphere in the country, and creating chaos are among their priority objectives. To demonstrate the point it will be enough only to glance at the performance of events such as the Sikhs in India, the Mohajir Qaumi [movement] in Pakistan, and the Taleban group in Afghanistan... [punctuation as published] Now after a passage of 17 years this group, whose executive elements, commanders, and organizers are not unknown to the university people and other Iranians, are the vanguard of this unpopular policy of the West in Iran.

It is incumbent upon you, Mr. President, to adroitly and assiduously prevent the growth of this search for chaos and lawlessness in the country, before we reveal what tendencies and individuals those gentlemen are connected with, and in coordination with what elements they carry out their adventurism. We ask you, according to the oath that you have taken to safeguard the rights of the nation on accepting the responsibility of the presidency, to enact your legal undertakings and not to allow matters to reach aggressive and destructive confrontation where neither the gardeners nor the garden can survive. Under such circumstances we university students and academics will be forced to defend the status and esteem of the university and ultimately the adverse results of all that will affect those who have failed to discharge their legal duties.

Wishing you success, a group of Tehran University students.

Pakistan

Pakistan: President, Prime Minister Condemn Kashmir Elections

BK0306024896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto have condemned the Indian Government's holding of so-called elections in occupied Kashmir with the help of weapons and force. The condemnation of the so-called elections in occupied Kashmir came during a meeting between the president and the prime minister at the President House in Islamabad yesterday.

During the meeting, various regional issues were discussed in the context of the changing situation around the country. The prime minister's coming visit to Turkey also came up during the meeting. The prime minister briefed the president on the present government's success in maintaining law and order in the country. The two leaders held extensive talks on the current economic and political situation in the country.

Pakistan: Official Notes 'Deteriorating' Rights Situation in Kashmir

BK0206141196 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 2 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has once again drawn the attention of the international community toward the fast deteriorating human rights situation in held-Kashmir. Federal Government Consultant Owais Javed Bangash has said India has the worst record of human rights in its Punjab province and the occupied valley of Kashmir. It has never allowed an international relief agency or human rights group to go into the held Kashmir because it is involved in carnage of innocent people. In a briefing to the 15-member delegation of Britain-based Kashmiris in Islamabad today, he said the best course for India is to honor United Nations resolutions on Kashmir and hold a plebiscite for self-determination of Kashmiri people because it cannot any longer rule Kashmiris by force and coercion.

Pakistan: Pakistanis Deported From Saudi Arabia Detained in Bombay

BK0206144796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 1 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A ship carrying Pakistani and Indian deportees from Saudi Arabia has been detained by police at Mumbai [Bombay] port in India. The Indian nationals were released after interrogation but about 1,400 Pakistani deportees are still on board the ship, Al-Medina. According to Mumbai police, the ship was detained on suspicion because it was scheduled to anchor at Karachi port prior to coming to Mumbai but it changed its route.

Pakistan: 'Official Sources' Report 40 Mirages Purchased From France

BK0206145396 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 31 May 96 p 1

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: Setting its eyes to make a stronger second line of defence, Pakistan recently bought 40 old Mirages from France, official sources told THE NEWS Thursday. [30 May]

"Yes, we have bought 40 Mirage IIIs from Sagem, a French firm, and the total deal costs about $120 million," defence sources confirmed.

Hectic investigations and interviews with several senior civil and uniformed officials reveal that the deal was struck early this year. "The per copy, including overhauling of the aircraft, cost Pakistan about $3 million, but the interesting part was that the French Sagem was also awarded the 'contract of' overhauling the flying birds, though Pakistan Aeronautical Complex Kamra does have the same facility where Mirages can be overhauled."

When Pakistan got 48 old Mirages from Australia in 1989, these Mirages were overhauled and retrofitted at Kamra, said the sources, who added that now 32 of them are fly-worthy.

"Another question being asked is as to how can one determine about the condition of these planes, with award of overhauling contract to Sagem," said the sources.

Investigations reveal that the deal sealed the fate of Rear Admiral K.M. Akhtar, presently on leave Director-General Defence Procurement [DG DP], as he released the down payment to Sagem against the wishes of high-ups.

The government, according to the sources, has now decided to replace him much before his 3 year term which expires in August this year. "Names of three senior military officers are recommended to the Prime Minister for appointment against the all-powerful slot of DG DP in the Defence Ministry," disclosed officials, who avoided to speak on the old Mirages deal.

The DG DP who went on a 10 day leave, has not returned to join his office on April 26. "I am suffering from some kind of heart ailment and as such I am not going to join the duty," said DG DP Akhtar, who was contacted on telephone by THE NEWS.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Government Efforts To End Electricity Strike Detailed

BK0106153896 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 1 Jun 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Water and power supply started returning to normal since yesterday afternoon as striking Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) engineers and technicians were taken by the police to their work places.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga on Friday [31 May] said the government wanted the strikers to return to work voluntarily and since they failed to do so the law was applied.

Power and Energy Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said: Police took all who are needed for the generation of power to their work places and made them to work. That included trade union leaders.

They came to work willingly, said General Ratwatte.

Hospitals and water service received priority and water supply was restored to some areas by 10 am. Other areas too received running water by evening.

The government has taken action to implement the Essential Services Order, said the President at the special press conference she addressed at the presidential secretariat and added: We will not allow some 12,000 persons to hold 18 million persons to ransom.

She said the government gave the strikers time to return and when it realised that they are bent on dictating terms to the government on matters of policy it decided on implementing the law.

She said some had asked her to act like Mr. Premadasa [former president] and added she would not employ such terror tactics. Acting like Mr. Premadasa would mean 'lifting' people and burning them on tyres. Short of killing people, we will do what we can, she said, to restore the power supply. We do not intend to act like Mr. Premadasa. We do expect to implement the mandate the people gave to us, the president said. [no quotation marks as published]

She thanked the public for being patient and enduring the hardships. She said some of them wanted to stage a march to Colombo protesting against the strike and she prevented them from doing it.

General Ratwatte said 'Operation Shock' is now being implemented and all officers needed for power generation had been rounded up and taken to their work places. They are working under strict supervision.

The president said all those who fail to report to work will lose their jobs and steps will be taken under the law to confiscate their property.

"We have come to the decision that we shall govern and give the people what we pledged. We will make use of the law to implement the mandate," she said.

She said CEB unions have no business to strike about the Lanka Electricity Company (LECO) without even consulting them.

The CEB is not going to be privatised, the president said.

The government is aware of an attempt to stage a general strike beginning Monday and is prepared to handle that situation, she added.

"We know what is happening. We know there is an effort to sabotage. We know some forces are behind all this. We know all that... We are prepared to meet any situation," the president said.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to permit the import of power generators free of customs duty and taxes in view of the present situation. This will apply to new and reconditioned generators.

Sri Lanka: President Sees Electricity Strike as Opposition Conspiracy

BK0106154096 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 1 Jun 96

[Report by T. Sabaratnam — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said on Friday [31 May] that the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) strike is a conspiracy by the main opposition party to topple the government.

She told the media at the Presidential Secretariat that sections whose misdeeds are being exposed by the various Presidential Commissions are behind this attempt.

She said: "We will take action against the conspirators and to nullify their effort."

She gave two specific instances and asked reporters to draw whatever inference they draw from them.

"Whatever connection you make is up to you. We will make the connections we can infer".

The first incident she adverted to was about a Gampaha MP who had pasted posters calling for an ending of the sittings of the Presidential Commissions. He did it the very morning the CEB workers went on strike.

The second was, Thursday evening (May 30) meeting of the UNP [United National Party] Working Committee.

Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mangala Samaraweera said they have information that the meeting was called to discuss the strike situation and a former minister whose name is repeatedly mentioned in the Hilton affair had said that the CEB workers should not be allowed to return to work.

"There are certain sections which are determined to bring down the government before the commissions conclude their sittings", added Mr. Samaraweera.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said the action of the striking trade unions also points towards the conspiracy.

The trade unions had not spoken about the privatisation of the Lanka Electricity Company (LECO) with the government or the CEB before last Tuesday. On Tuesday evening, the CEB unions informed the Power and Energy Ministry that unless the government abandoned the privatisation of LECO before 12 noon on Wednesday they would go on strike.

The president said the cabinet which met on Wednesday morning decided that no trade union could dictate to the government what policy it should follow. The government is only bound by the mandate obtained from the people.

"Nowhere in the world are trade unions allowed to decide the policy of the government and we will not do it", the president said.

She said at 12 noon on Wednesday the CEB unions walked out removing some vital parts of the generators including the one at the Colombo General Hospital. She paid a tribute to the doctors who managed the situation by using hand pumps and restarting the generator themselves.

On the second day, Thursday, two technicians returned to work at the General Hospital saying that the unions had asked them to work but vanished in a short while taking two more vital parts, the president said.

She asked in which part of the world such things are resorted to by striking trade unions. Even in times of war, hospitals are permitted to function, she said.

The strikers did not even give consideration to the human factor. Hundreds of pints of blood had to be thrown away because of the strikers. Many patients died in hospitals.

She said, there was an effort to bring the Sri Lanka Telecom, bank and other trade unions into the strike. That points to a wider conspiracy.

"The Telecom Unions had been consulted about the privatisation and they agreed to that. Now we hear that even the Telecom unions are being provoked to strike," the president said.

She reiterated the government's firm stand on privatisation. The government is only continuing the process started by the United National Party. But the UNP sold government enterprises for prices far below the value assessed by the government valuer. The People's Alliance government's policy is to fetch a value more than that assessed by the government valuer.

The sale of the shares of LECO has been stopped as the offer was far bellow the assessed value.

The president said the CEB unions have demanded the cancellation of the BOO [expansion unknown] and BOI [Board of Investment] projects agreed so far. No government would agree to such a demand.

The president said that vandalism and sabotage of the generators and the demand to alter the government's policy strengthens the view that the strike is part of the wider conspiracy to overthrow the government.

Sri Lanka: Opposition Criticizes President for Electricity Strike

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, June 2 (AFP) — A crippling four-day electricity strike has ended in Sri Lanka after a disputed settlement but the opposition lambasted President Chandrika Kumaratunga for not stopping the blackout sooner.

The main opposition United National Party (UNP) said the president blocked attempts by her own labour minister, Mahinda Rajapakse, and a faction of the ruling party from initiating a dialogue and reaching an early end to strike.

"She did not even summon an emergency meeting of the cabinet ... which shows her arrogant and cavalier approach to a national crisis," the UNP said in a hard-hitting three page statement.

It said the president behaved in the most "negligent and callous manner" in allowing the strike to drag on without an attempt to negotiate a settlement and described her administration as arrogant and incompetent.

"The nation which is in agony cannot and will not endure her incompetence much longer," the UNP said.

The strike ended on Saturday [1 June] following a controversial deal with government back-benches but the authorities say they will not recognise the agreement. However, workers are back and electricity was restored at midnight Saturday.

For her part, Kumaratunga had accused the UNP of instigating the strike, a charge denied by the opposition as well as the strikers, and vowed to resort to any means, short of killing, to restore essential services.

Within hours of her remarks, unidentified gunmen opened fire at the leader of the main telecommunications union who had expressed solidarity with the striking electricity workers. The union leader, J.B.P. Dissanayake, escaped unhurt but said the attack was clearly aimed at subduing trade union agitation against the government's privatisation of public utilities.

The electricity unions said they called off the strike following an agreement with a group of ruling party back-bench legislators that the government will review its privatisation plan, the main demand of the workers.

The government MPs, formed into an influential pressure group called the "Mulberry Group," said they were astonished by the government's decision to victimise the strikers and impose fresh conditions.

However, under pressure from the Mulberry group, the workers were being allowed to report for duty without further harassment, government back-bencher Ravi Karunanayake said.

The Mulberry Group with its formidable 45-member block vote had issued thinly veiled threats Saturday that they would vote against an extension of the state of emergency in parliament unless the government honoured the deal with strikers.

"This is a prestige battle," Mulberry front runner Dulles Alahaperuma said adding that Power and Energy Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte was unhappy because they brought about a settlement.

"We will show our strength at the right time," Alahaperuma said raising fears for the stability of Kumaratunga's People's Alliance coalition which has only a fragile one-seat majority in parliament.

The strike had left the country without grid electricity since Wednesday wreaking havoc on food, fuel and water distribution and forcing hospitals to throw away large quantities of blood as refrigeration failed.

Although the strike has ended, the country's energy crisis is far from over.

Officials said Sunday that the energy shortage has worsened with no signs of the expected monsoon rains setting in and reservoirs feeding hydro electricity stations running dangerously low.

The current six-hour daily power cut will be extended by two more hours from Tuesday despite the substantial energy saving as a result of the strike.

"The situation has become very, very critical," an official said. "We are now appealing to radio and television stations to cut back on their transmission times to help get over the difficult period.

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